

THE  
H I S T O R Y  
O F T H E  
T E N P E R S E C U T I O N S

In the PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

To which is added,

An Account of the Martyrdom of John Hufs  
and Jerome of Prague; together with di-  
vers Letters, wrote by John Hufs while  
he was under Persecution.

Extracted from the Martyrology of Mr JOHN FOX.

E D I N B U R G H :

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M D C C L X I.



THE PERSECUTION

Printed by the PRIMITIVE CHURCH



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THE



THE  
H I S T O R Y  
OF THE  
TEN PERSECUTIONS, &c.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

**I**N the following tractation two special points I shall chiefly commend to the reader, as most requisite and necessary for every Christian man to observe and to note for his own experience and profit; as, first, the disposition and nature of this world; secondly, the nature and condition of the Kingdom of Christ; the vanity of the one, and establishment of the other; the unprosperous and unquiet state of the one, ruled by man's violence and wisdom, and the happy success of the other, ever ruled by God's blessing and providence; the wrath and revenging hand of God in the one, and his mercy upon the other. The world I call all such as be without or against Christ, either by ignorance not knowing him, or by Heathenish life not following him, or by violence resisting him. On the other side, the kingdom of Christ in this world, I take to be all them which belong to the faith of Christ, and here take his part in this world against the world: the number of whom although it be much smaller than the other, and always lightly is hated and molested of the world; yet it is the number which the Lord peculiarly doth bless and prosper, and ever will. And this number of Christ's subjects is it which we call the visible church here in earth. Which visible church,

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having in itself a difference of two sorts of people, so is it to be divided in two parts; of which the one standeth of such as be of outward profession only, the other which by election inwardly are joined to Christ. The first in words and lips seem to honour Christ, and are in the visible church only, but not in the church invisible, and partake the outward sacraments of Christ, but not the inward blessing of Christ. The other are both in the visible, and also in the invisible church of Christ, which not in words only and outward profession, but also in heart, do truly serve and honour Christ, partaking not only of the sacraments, but also the heavenly blessings and grace of Christ.

And many times it happeneth, that as between the world and the kingdom of Christ there is a continual repugnance; so between these two parts of this visible church afore said oft-times groweth great variance and mortal persecution, insomuch that sometime the true church of Christ hath no greater enemies, than of their own profession and company, as happened not only in the time of Christ and his apostles, but also from time to time almost continually, *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 1.* but especially in these latter days of the church, under the persecution of Antichrist and his retinue; as by the reading of this volume more manifestly hereafter may appear.

At the first preaching of Christ, and coming of the gospel, who should rather have known and received him, than the Pharisees and scribes of that people, which had his law? And yet who persecuted and rejected him more than they themselves? What followed? They in refusing Christ to be their king, and choosing rather to be subject unto Cesar, were by the said their own Cesar at length destroyed; when as Christ's subjects the same time escaped the danger. Whereby it is to be learned, what a dangerous thing it is to refuse the gospel of God, when it is so gently offered.

The like example of God's wrathful punishment is to be noted no less in the Romans also themselves. For when Tiberius Cesar, having received by letters from Pontius Pilate of the doings of Christ, of his miracles, resurrection, and

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and ascension into heaven, and how he was received as God of many, was himself also moved with belief of the same, and did confer thereof with the whole senate of Rome, to have Christ adored as God. They not agreeing thereunto refused him, because that, contrary to the law of the Romans, he was consecrated (said they) for God before the senate of Rome had so decreed and approved him, &c. *Tertul. Apol. cap. 5.* Thus the vain senate following rather the law of man, than of God, and which were contented with the Emperor to reign over them, and were not contented with the meek King of glory; the Son of God, to be their king, were after much like sort to the Jews scourged and intrapped for their unjust refusing, by the same way which they themselves did prefer. For as they preferred the emperor, and rejected Christ; so the just permission of God did stir up their own emperors against them in such sort, that both the senators themselves were almost all devoured, and the whole city most horribly afflicted for the space almost of three hundred years together. For, first, the same Tiberius, which for a great part of his reign was a moderate and a tolerable prince, afterward was to them a sharp and heavy tyrant, who neither favoured his own mother, nor spared his own nephews, nor the princes of the city, such as were his own counsellors, of whom, to the number of twenty, he left not two or three alive; and so cruel was he to the city, that, as the story recordeth, *Nullus a pœna hominum cessabat dies, ne religiosus quidem ac sacer.* Suetonius reporteth him to be so stern of nature and tyrannical, that in time of his reign, very many were accused and condemned with their wives and children, maids also first deflowered, then put to death. In one day he recordeth twenty persons to be drawn to the place of execution. By whom also, through the just punishment of God, Pilate, under whom Christ was crucified, was apprehended and accused at Rome, deposed, then banished to the town of Lions, and at length did slay himself. Neither did Herod and Caiaphas long escape, of whom more followeth hereafter. Agrippa also by him was cast into prison, albeit afterward he was re-



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stored. In the reign of Tiberius, the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, which was the seventeenth of this emperor, by the malice of the Jews suffered his blessed passion for the conquering of sin, death, and Satan the prince of this world, and rose again the third day. After whose blessed passion and

*Anno 34.* resurrection, this foresaid Tiberius Nero (otherwise called Biberius Mero) lived six years; during which time no persecution was yet stirring in Rome against the Christians, through the commandment of the emperor.

In the reign also of this emperor, and the year which was the next after the passion of our Saviour,

*Anno 35.* or somewhat more, St Paul was converted to the faith. After the death of Tiberius, when he had reigned three and twenty years, succeeded C. Cesar

Caligula, Claudius Nero, and Domitius Nero:

*Anno 39.* which three were likewise such scourges to the senate and people of Rome, that the first not

only took other mens wives violently from them, but also deflowered three of his own sisters, and afterward banished them. So wicked he was, that he commanded himself

to be worshipped as God, and temples to be erected in his name, and used to sit in the temple among the gods, requiring his images to be set up in all temples, and also in

the temple of Jerusalem; which caused great disturbance among the Jews, and then began the abomination of desolation to be set up in the holy place, spoken of in the

gospel. His cruel condition, or else displeasure, was such towards the Romans, that he wished that all the people

of Rome had but one neck, that he at his pleasure might destroy such a multitude. By this said Caligula, Herod,

the murderer of John Baptist, and condemner of Christ, was condemned to perpetual banishment, where he died

miserably. Caiaphas also, which wickedly sat upon Christ, was the same time removed from the high priest's room,

and Jonathan set in his place. The raging fierceness of this Caligula incensed against the Romans, had not thus

ceased, had not he been cut off by the hands of a tribune

and

and other gentlemen, which slew him in the fourth year of his reign. After whose death *Anno 43.* were found in his closet two little libels, one called a sword, the other the dagger: in the which libels were contained the names of those senators and noblemen of Rome, whom he had purposed to put to death. Besides this sword and dagger, there was found also a coffer, wherein divers kinds of poison were kept in glasses and vessels for the purpose, to destroy a wonderful number of people; which poisons afterward being thrown into the sea, destroyed a great number of fish. *Gotfri. viterb.*

But that which this Caligula had only conceived, the same did the other two, which came after, bring to pass. Claudius Nero, who reigned thirteen years with no little cruelty; but especially the third of these Neroes, called *Domitius Nero*, which succeeding after *Anno 56.* Claudius, reigned fourteen years, with such fury and tyranny, that he slew the most part of the senators, and destroyed the whole order of knighthood in Rome. So prodigious a monster of nature was he, more like a beast, yea, rather a devil, than a man, that he seemed to be born to the destruction of men. Such was his monstrous uncleanness, that he abstained not from his own mother, his natural sister, nor from any degree of kindred. Such was his wretched cruelty, that he caused to be put to death his mother, his brother-in-law, his sister, his wife great with child, all his instructors, Seneca and Lucan, with divers more of his own kindred and consanguinity. Moreover, he commanded Rome to be set on fire in twelve places, and so continued it six days and seven nights in burning, while that he, to see the example how Troy burned, sung the verses of Homer. And to avoid the infamy thereof, he laid the fault upon the Christian men, and caused them to be persecuted. And so continued this miserable emperor in his reign fourteen years, till at last the senate proclaiming him a public enemy unto mankind, condemned him to be drawn through the city, and to be whipped to death. For the fear whereof, he flying the hands of his enemies, in the night fled to a manor of his servants in the country, where he was forced

to slay himself, complaining that he had then neither friend nor enemy left that would do so much for him. In the latter end of this Domitius Nero, Peter and Paul were put to death for the testimony and faith of Christ, *anno* 69.

Thus ye see, which is worthy to be marked, how the just scourge and heavy indignation of God from time to time ever followeth there, and how all things there go to ruin. Neither doth any thing well prosper, where Christ Jesus the Son of God is contemned and not received, as by these examples may appear, both of Romans, which not only were thus consumed and plagued by their own emperors, but also by civil wars, whereof three happened in two years at Rome, after the death of Nero, and other casualties, (as in Sueton is testified), so that in the days of Tiberius aforesaid, five thousand Romans were hurt and slain at one time by the fall of a theatre; and also most especially by the destruction of the Jews, which about this same time, in the year three score and thirteen, and forty years after the passion of Christ, and the third year after the suffering of St Peter and Paul, were destroyed by Titus, and Vespasian his father, (who succeeded after Nero in the empire), to the number of eleven hundred thousand, besides them which Vespasian slew in subduing the country of Galilee, over and beside them also which were sold and sent into Egypt and other provinces to vile slavery, to the number of seventeen thousand. Two thousand were brought with Titus in his triumph; of which, part he gave to be devoured of the wild beasts, part otherwise most cruelly were slain. By whose case all nations and realms may take example, what it is to reject the visitation of God's verity being sent, and much more to persecute them which be sent of God for their salvation.

And as this wrathful vengeance of God thus hath been shewed upon this rebellious people, both of the Jews and of the Romans, for their contempt of Christ, whom God so punished by their own emperors; so neither the emperors themselves, for persecuting Christ in his members, escaped without their just reward: for among so many emperors which put so many Christian martyrs to death, during the space of these first three hundred years, few or none of them escaped, either



not slaying themselves, or by some miserable end or other worthily revenged. First, of the poisoning of Tiberius, and of the slaughter of the other three Neroes after him, sufficiently is declared before. After Nero, Domitius Galba within seven months was slain by Otho. And so did Otho afterward slay himself, being overcome by Vitellus. And was not Vitellus shortly after drawn through the city of Rome, and after he was tormented was thrown into Tiber? Titus, a good emperor, is thought to be poisoned of Domitian his brother. The said Domitian, after he had been a persecutor of the Christians, was slain in his chamber, not without the consent of his wife. Likewise Commodus was murdered of Narcissus. The like end was of Pertinax and Julianus. Moreover, after that Severus was slain here in England, (and lieth at York), did not his son Bassianus slay his brother Geta, and he after slain of Martialis? Macrinus, with his son Diadumenus, were both slain of their own soldiers. After whom Heliogabalus, that monstrous bellipanch, was of his own people slain, and drawn through the city, and cast into Tiber. Alexander Severus, that worthy and learned emperor, which said he would not feed his servants doing nothing with the bowels of the commonwealth, although in life and virtues he was much unlike other emperors, yet proved the like end, being slain at Mentz, with his godly mother Mammea, by Maximinus, whom the emperor before of a muleteer had advanced to great dignities. The which Maximinus also, after three years was slain himself of his soldiers. What should I speak of Maximus and Balbinus in like sort both slain in Rome? of Gordian slain by Philip? of Philip the first christened emperor, slain, or rather martyred, for the same cause? of wicked Decius drowned, and his son slain the same time in battle? of Gallus and Volusianus his son, emperors after Decius, both slain by conspiracy of Æmilianus, who rose against them both in war, and within three months after was slain himself? Next to Æmilianus succeeded Valerianus and Galienus his son, of whom Valerianus (who was a persecutor of the Christians) was taken prisoner of the Persians, and there made a riding fool of Sapoors their king, who used him for a stool to leap upon

upon his horse, while his son Galienus, sleeping at Rome, either would not, or could not once proffer to revenge his father's ignominy; for after the taking of Valerian, so many emperors rose up as were provinces in the Roman monarchy. At length Galienus also was killed by Aureolus, which warred against him. It were too long here to speak of Aurelianus, another persecutor, slain of his secretary; of Tacitus, and Florinus his brother, of whom the first reigned six months, and was slain at Pontus; the other reigned two months, and was murdered at Tarsis; of Probus, who although a good civil emperor, yet was he destroyed by his soldiers. After whom Carus, the next emperor, was slain by lightning. Next to Carus followed the impious and wicked persecutor Dioclesian, with his fellows Maximian, Valerius, Maximinus, Maxentius, and Licinius, under whom all at one time (during the time of Dioclesian) the greatest, and most grievous persecution, was moved against the Christians ten years together; of which, Dioclesian and Maximian deposed themselves from the empire. Galerius, the chiefest minister of the persecution, after his terrible persecutions, fell into a wonderful sickness, having such a sore risen in the nether part of his belly, which consumed his privy members, and so did swarm with worms, that, being curable neither by surgery nor physic, he confessed that it happened for his cruelty towards the Christians, and so called in his proclamations against them. Notwithstanding he not able to sustain (as some say) the stink of his sore, slew himself. Maximinus, in his war, being tormented with pain in his guts, there died. Maxentius was vanquished by Constantine, and drowned in Tiber. Licinius likewise, being overcome by the said Constantine the Great, was deposed from his empire, and afterward slain of his soldiers. But, on the other side, after the time of Constantine, when as the faith of Christ was received into the imperial seat, we read of no emperor after the like sort destroyed or molested, except it were Julianus, or Basilius, (which expelled one Zeno, and was afterward expelled himself), or Valens. Beside these, we read of no emperor to come to ruin and decay, as the others before mentioned. *Ex lib. hist. tripart.*

And

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And thus have we in brief sum collected out of the chronicles the unquiet and miserable state of the emperors of Rome, until the time of Christian Constantine, with the examples, no less terrible than manifest, of God's severe justice upon them, for their contemptuous refusing and persecuting the faith and name of Christ their Lord.

Moreover, in much like sort and condition, if leisure of time, or haste of matter, would suffer me a little to digress unto more lower times, and to come more near home, the like examples I could also infer of this our country of England, concerning the terrible plagues of God against the churlish and unthankful refusing, or abusing the benefit of his truth. First, we read how that God stirred up Gildas to preach to the old Britons, and to exhort them unto repentance and amendment of life, and afore to warn them of plagues to come, if they repented not. What availed it? Gildas was laughed to scorn, and taken for a false prophet; and a malicious preacher. The Britons, with lusty courage, whorish faces, and unrepenting hearts, went forth to sin, and to offend the Lord their God. What followed? God sent in their enemies on every side, and destroyed them; and gave the land to other nations. Not many years past, God, seeing idolatry, superstition, hypocrisy, and wicked living, used in this realm, raised up that godly learned man John Wickliff, to preach unto our fathers repentance, and to exhort them to amend their lives, to forsake their Papistry and idolatry, their hypocrisy and superstition, and to walk in the fear of God. His exhortations were not regarded, he, with his sermons, was despised, his books, and he himself, after his death, were burnt. What followed? They slew their right king, and set up three wrong kings in a row, under whom all the noble blood was slain, and half the commons thereto, what in France, and with their own sword, in fighting among themselves for the crown; and the cities and towns were decayed, and the land brought half to a wilderness, in respect of what it was before. O extreme plagues of God's vengeance! Since that time, even of late years, God once again having pity on this realm of England, raised up his prophets, namely, William Tindall, Thomas Bilney, John

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Frith,



Frith, Doctor Barnes, Jerome Garret, Anthony Person, with divers others, which, both with their writings and sermons, earnestly laboured to call us unto repentance, that by this means the fierce wrath of God might be turned away from us. But how were they treated? How were their painful labours regarded? They themselves were condemned and burnt as heretics, and their books condemned and burnt as heretical. John xvi. 2. *The time shall come, saith Christ, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God good service.* Whether anything since that time hath happened to this realm worthy the name of a plague, let the godly wise judge. If God hath deferred his punishment, or forgiven us these our wicked deeds, as I trust he hath, let us not therefore be proud and high minded, but most humbly thank him for his tender mercies, and beware of the like ungodly enterprises hereafter. Neither is there here any need to speak of these our lower and latter times, which have been in King Henry's and King Edward's days, seeing the memory thereof is yet fresh, and cannot be forgotten. But let this pass, of this I am sure, that God yet once again is come on visitation to this church of England, yea, and that more lovingly and beneficially than ever he did before; for in this visitation he hath redressed many abuses, and cleansed his church of much ungodliness and superstition, and made it a glorious church, if it be compared to the old form and state. And now how grateful receivers we be, with what hearts, study, and reverence, we embrace that which he hath given, that I refer to them that see our fruits. But this by the way of digression. Now to regress again to the state of the first former times. It remaineth, that as I have set forth the justice of God upon these Roman persecutors; so now we declare their persecutions raised up against the people and servants of Christ, within the space of three hundred years after Christ; which persecutions in number commonly are counted to be ten, besides their persecutions first moved by the Jews in Jerusalem, and other places, against the apostles. In the which, first St Stephen the deacon was put to death, with divers others moe, in the same rage of time either slain or cast into prison. At the doing whereof, Saul, the  
same

same time played the doughty Pharisee, being not yet converted to the faith of Christ, whereof the history is plain in the Acts of the apostles, set forth at large by St Luke.

After the martyrdom of this blessed Stephen, suffered next James the holy apostle of Christ, and brother of John; of which James mention is made in the Acts of the apostles, the 12th chapter. Where is declared, how that, not long after the stoning of Stephen, king Herod stretched forth his hand, to take and afflict certain of the congregation; among whom James was one, whom he slew with the sword, &c. Of this James, Eusebius also inferreth mention, alledging Clement, thus writing a memorable story of him. This James, (saith Clement), when he was brought to the tribunal seat, he that brought him (and was the cause of his trouble) seeing him to be condemned, and that he should suffer death; as he went to the execution, he being moved therewith in heart and conscience, confessed himself also of his own accord to be a Christian. And so were they led forth together, where in the way he desired of James to forgive him that he had done. After that James had a little paused with himself upon the matter, turning to him; Peace (saith he) be to thee, brother, and kissed him; and both were beheaded together, in the year of our Lord thirty and six.

Dorotheus in his book named Synopsis, testifieth, that Nicanor one of the seven deacons, with two thousand others which believed in Christ, suffered also the same day when as Stephen did suffer.

The said Dorotheus witnesseth also, that Simon, another of the deacons, bishop afterward of Bostrum in Arabia, was there burned. Parmenas also, another of the deacons, suffered.

Thomas preached to the Parthians, Medes, and Persians, also to the Germans, Hiraconies, Baëtries, and Magies. He suffered in Calamina, a city of Juda, being slain with a dart.

Simon Zelotes preached at Mauritania, and in the country of Africk, and in Britannia; he was likewise crucified.

Judas, brother of James, called also *Thaddeus*, and *Lebbeus*, preached to the Edessens, and to all Mesopotamia:

he was slain under Angarus, king of the Edessens in Berito.

Simon, called *Cananeus*, which was brother to Jude above mentioned, and to James the younger, which all were the sons of Mary Cleophas, and of Alpheus, was bishop of Jerusalem after James, and was crucified in a city of Egypt in the time of Trajanus the emperor, as Dorotheus recordeth. But Abdias writeth, that he, with his brother Jude, were both slain by a tumult of the people in Suanix a city of Parfidis.

Mark the exangelist, and first bishop of Alexandria, preached the gospel in Egypt, and there, drawn with ropes unto the fire, was burned, and afterward buried in a place called there *Bucolus*, under the reign of Trajanus the emperor.

Bartholomeus is said also to preach to the Indians, and to have converted the gospel of St Matthew into their tongue, where he continued a great space, doing many miracles. At last in Albania, a city of Greater Armenia, after divers persecutions, he was beaten down with staves, then crucified, and after being excoriated, he was at length beheaded. *Ioan. de monte regali.*

Of Andrew the apostle, and brother to Peter, thus writeth Hierome, in his book *De catalogo scriptorum eccles.* Andrew, the brother of Peter, (in the time and reign of Vespasianus, as our ancestors have reported), did preach in the fourscore year of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Scythians, Sogdians, to the Saxons, and in a city which is called *Augustia*, where the Ethiopians do now inhabit. He was buried in Patris, a city of Achaia, being crucified of Egeas the governor of the Edessians. Hitherto writeth Hierome, although in the number of years he seemeth a little to miss; for Vespasianus reached not to the fourscore year after Christ. But Bernard, in his second sermon, and St Cyprian, in his book *De duplici martyrio*, do make mention of the confession and martyrdom of this blessed apostle; whereof partly out of these, partly out of other credible writers, we have collected after this manner: That, when as Andrew being conversant in a city of Achaia called *Patris*, through his diligent preaching had brought many to



to the faith of Christ; Egeas the governor knowing this, resorted thither, to the intent he might constrain as many as did believe Christ to be God, by the whole consent of the senate, to do sacrifice unto the idols, and so give divine honour unto them. Andrew thinking good at the beginning to resist the wicked counsel, and the doings of Egeas, went unto him, saying to this effect unto him; That it behoved him which was judge of men, first to know his Judge which dwelleth in heaven, and then to worship him being known; and so in worshipping the true God, to revoke his mind from false gods and blind idols. These words spake Andrew to the consul.

But he greatly therewith discontented, demanded of him whether he was the same Andrew that did overthrow the temple of the gods, and persuaded men of that superstitious sect, which the Romans of late had commanded to be abolished and rejected. Andrew did plainly affirm, that the princes of the Romans did not understand the truth, and that the Son of God, coming from heaven into the world for man's sake, hath taught and declared how those idols, whom they so honoured as gods, were not only not gods, but also most cruel devils, enemies to mankind, teaching the people nothing else but that wherewith God is offended, and being offended, turneth away and regardeth them not; and so by the wicked service of the devil, they do fall headlong into all wickedness, and after their departing, nothing remaineth unto them, but their evil deeds.

But the proconsul esteeming these things to be as vain, especially seeing the Jews (as he said) had crucified Christ before, therefore charged and commanded Andrew not to teach and preach such things any more; or if he did, that he should be fastened to the cross with all speed.

Andrew abiding in his former mind very constant, answered thus concerning the punishment which he threatened; he would not have preached the honour and glory of the cross, if he had feared the death of the cross. Whereupon sentence of condemnation was pronounced, that Andrew teaching and enterprising a new sect, and taking away the religion of their gods, ought to be crucified. Andrew coming to the place, and seeing afar off the

the cross prepared, did change neither countenance nor colour, as the imbecillity of mortal men is wont to do, neither did his blood shrink, neither did he fail in his speech, his body fainted not, neither was his mind molested, his understanding did not fail him, as it is the manner of men to do, but out of the abundance of his heart his mouth did speak; and fervent charity did appear in his words as kindled sparks: he said, O cross most welcome and long-looked-for, with a willing mind joyfully and desirously I come to thee, being the scholar of him which did hang on thee; because I have been always thy lover, and have coveted to embrace thee. So being crucified, he yielded up the ghost, and fell on sleep, the day before the calends of December.

Matthew, otherwise named *Levi*, first of a publican made an apostle, wrote his gospel to the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, as recordeth Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 24. 39. lib. 5. cap. 8. cap. 10.* Also *Irenæus, lib. 3. cap. 1.* Item *Hieronymus in catalogo scrip. ecclesiast.* Concerning the doings and decreements of this blessed apostle and evangelist, divers things be recorded by Julius Africanus, under the pretended name of *Abdias*, also of Vincentius, Perionius, and others, but in such sort, as by the contents may greatly be suspected the matter not to lack some crafty forgery, for the more establishment of later decretals, and Romish doctrine, as touching merits, consecration of nuns, the superstitious prescription of Lent fast, not only in abstaining from all flesh meats, but also from all matrimonial copulation between man and wife, during the said time of holy Lent. Item, the strict prohibition not to taste any bodily sustenance, before receiving of the Lord's supper; in ordaining of mass, and that no nun must marry after the vow of her profession, with such other like.

*Ioan. de monte regali*, testifieth of Matthias, after he had preached to the Jews, at length he was stoned and beheaded. Some others record that he died in Ethiopia.

Philippus the holy apostle, after he had much laboured among the barbarous nations in preaching the word of salvation to them, at length he suffered as the other apostles did, in Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia, being there crucified

cified and stoned to death, where also he was buried, and his daughters also with him.

Of James, the brother of the Lord, thus we read in the story of Clement and Egesippus.

**A**fter that Festus had sent the apostle Paul to Rome after his appellation made at Cesarea, and that the Jews by the means thereof had lost their hope of performing their malicious vow against him conceived, they fell upon James the brother of our Lord, who was bishop at Jerusalem, against whom they being bent with like malice, brought him forth before them, and required him to deny before all the people the faith of Christ. But he, otherwise than they all looked for, freely, and with a greater constancy, before all the multitude confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, our Saviour, and our Lord. Whereupon, they not being able to abide the testimony of this man any longer, because he was thought to be the justest among them all, for the highness of divine wisdom, and godliness, which in living he declared, they killed him, finding the more opportunity to accomplish their mischief, because the kingdom the same time was vacant; for Festus being dead in Jewry, the administration of that province was destitute of a ruler, and a deputy. But after what manner James was killed, the words of Clement do declare, which writeth, that he was cast down from the pinnacle of the temple, and being smitten with the instrument of a fuller, was slain. But Egesippus, which lived in the time next after the apostles, describeth the cause diligently in his fifth commentary, after this manner as followeth.

James the brother of our Lord took in hand to govern the church after the apostles, being counted of all men from the time of our Lord to be a just and perfect man. Many and divers other Jameses there were beside him, but this was born holy from his mother's womb, he drunk no wine nor any strong drink, neither did he eat any living creature, the razor never came upon his head, he was not anointed with oil, neither did he use bath, to him only was



was it lawful to enter into the holy place, neither was he clothed with woollen cloth, but with silk, and he only entered into the temple, falling upon his knees, asking remission for the people, so that his knees by oft kneeling lost the sense of feeling, being benumbed and hardened like the knees of a camel. He was (for worshipping God, and craving forgiveness for the people) called *Just*, and for the excellency of his just life named *Oblias*, which (if you do interpret it) is the safeguard and justice of the people, as the prophets declare of him: therefore when as many of the heretics which were among the people asked him, What manner of door Jesus should be? he answered, That he was the Saviour. Whereof some do believe him to be Jesus Christ, but the aforesaid heretics neither believe the resurrection, neither that any shall come, which shall render unto every man according to his works; but as many as believe, they believed for James his cause. Whenas many therefore of the princes did believe, there was a tumult made of the scribes, Jews, and Pharisees, saying, "It is dangerous lest that all the people do look for this Jesus, as for Christ." Therefore they gathered themselves together, and said to James, "We beseech thee restrain the people, for they believe in Jesus, as though he were Christ; we pray thee persuade them all which come unto the feast of the passover of Jesus; for we are all obedient unto thee, and all the people do testify of thee that thou art just, neither that thou dost accept the person of any man, therefore persuade the people that they be not deceived in Jesus, and all the people and we will obey thee: therefore stand upon the pillar of the temple, that thou mayst be seen from above, and that thy words may be perceived of all the people, for to this passover all the tribes do come with all the country." And thus the forenamed scribes and Pharisees did set James upon the battlements of the church, and they cried unto him and said, "Thou just man, whom all we ought to obey, because this people is led after Jesus, which is crucified, tell what is the door of Jesus crucified." And he answered with a great voice, "What do you ask me of Jesus the Son of man, seeing that he sitteth on the right hand of  
" God

" God in heaven, and shall come in the clouds of the sky?" But when many were persuaded of this, they glorified God upon the witness of James, and said, " Hosanna in the highest to the son of David." Then the scribes and the Pharisees said among themselves, " We have done evil that we have caused such a testimony of Jesus, but let us go up, and let us take him, that they, being compelled with fear, may deny that faith." And they cried out, saying, " O, O, this just man also is seduced." And they fulfilled that scripture which is spoken of in Isaiah, " Let us take away the just man, because he is not profitable for us, wherefore let them eat the fruits of their works." Therefore they went up to throw down the just man, and said among themselves, " Let us stone this just man James;" and they took him to smite him with stones, for he was not yet dead when he was cast down. But he turning, fell down upon his knees, saying, " O Lord God, Father, I beseech thee to forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But when they had smitten him with stones, one of the priests of the children of Rechas, the son of Charobim, spake to them the testimony which is in Jeremiah the prophet, " Leave off, what do ye? The just man prayeth for you." And one of those which were present took a fuller's instrument, wherewith they did use to beat and purge cloath, and smote the just man on his head, and so he finished his martyrdom, and they buried him in the same place, and his pillar abideth still by the temple. He was a true testimony to the Jews and the Gentiles. And shortly after, Vespasianus the emperor destroying the land of Jewry, brought them into captivity. These things being thus written at large of Egesippus, do well agree to those which Clement did write of him. This James was so notable a man, that for his justice he was had in honour of all men, insomuch that the wise men of the Jews, shortly after his martyrdom, did impute the cause of the besieging of Jerusalem, and other calamities which happened unto them, to no other cause, but unto the violence and injury done to this man. Also Josephus hath not left this out of his history, where he speaketh of him after this manner :

“ These things so chanced unto the Jews for a vengeance,  
 “ because of that just man James, which was the brother  
 “ of Jesus, whom they called Christ, for the Jews killed  
 “ him, although he was a righteous man.” *Joseph. lib. 10.*

The same Josephus declareth his death in the same book and chapter, saying, “ Cesar hearing of the death of Festus, sent Albinus the lieutenant into Jewry: but Ananus the younger, being bishop, and of the sect of the Sadducees, trusting that he had obtained a convenient time, seeing that Festus was dead, and Albinus entered on his journey, he called a council, and calling many unto him, among whom was James by name, the brother of Jesus which is called Christ, he stoned them, accusing them as breakers of the law.”

Whereby it appeareth, that many other, besides James, also, at the same time, were martyred and put to death among the Jews, for the faith of Christ.

These things being thus declared for the martyrdom of the apostles, and the persecution of the Jews; now let us (by the grace of Christ our Lord), comprehend with like brevity, the persecutions raised by the Romans against the Christians in the primitive age of the church, during the space of three hundred years, till the coming of godly Constantine; which persecutions are reckoned of Eusebius, and by the most part of writers, to the number of ten most special.

Wherein marvellous it is to see and read the numbers incredible of Christian innocents that were slain and tormented, some one way, some another, as Rabanus saith, and saith truly, *Alii ferro perempti; alii flammis exusti; alii flagris verberati; alii vectibus perforari; alii cruciati patibulo; alii demersi pelagi periculo; alii vivi decoriati; alii vinculis mancipati; alii linguis privati; alii lapidibus obruti; alii a frigore afflicti; alii fame cruciati; alii truncatis manibus, alique cæsis membris, spectaculum contumeliae nudi propter nomen Domini portantes, &c.*; that is, “ Some slain with  
 “ sword; some burnt with fire; some with whips scourged;  
 “ some stabbed with forks of iron; some fastened to  
 “ the cross or gibbet; some drowned in the sea; some  
 “ their



“ their skins pluckt off; some their tongues cut off; some  
 “ stoned to death; some killed with cold; some starved  
 “ with hunger; some their hands cut off, or otherwise  
 “ dismembered, have been so left naked to the open shame  
 “ of the world,” &c. Whereof Augustine also, in his book  
*De civit. lib. 22. cap. 6.* thus saith: *Ligabantur, includeban-*  
*tur, cædebantur, torquebantur, urebantur, laniabantur, truci-*  
*dabantur, multiplicabantur, non pugnantes pro salute, sed sa-*  
*lutem contemnentes pro servatore.* Whose kinds of punish-  
 ments, although they were divers, yet the manner of con-  
 stancy in all these martyrs was one. And yet notwith-  
 standing the sharpness of these so many and sundry tor-  
 ments, and like cruelness of the tormentors; yet such was  
 the number of these constant saints that suffered, or rather  
 such was the power of the Lord in his saints, that, as Hie-  
 rone in his epistle to Cromatius and Heliodorus saith,  
*Nullus esset dies qui non ultra quinque millium numerum mar-*  
*týrum reperiri posset ascriptus, excepto die calendarum Ianu-*  
*arii;* that is, “ There is no day in the whole year, unto  
 “ which the number of five thousand martyrs cannot be  
 “ ascribed, except only the first day of January.”

### The first Persecution.

THE first of these ten persecutions was stirred up by  
 Nero Domitius, the sixth emperor before  
 mentioned, about the year of our Lord three- Anno 67.  
 score and seven. The tyrannous rage of which  
 emperor was so fierce against the Christians, (as Eusebius  
 recordeth, *lib. 2. cap. 24. 25. 26.*), *Usque adeo ut videres*  
*repletas humanis corporibus civitates, jacentes mortuos simul*  
*cum parvulis senes, fœminarumque absque ulla sexus reveren-*  
*tia nudata in publico rejectaque starent cadavera;* that is,  
 “ Infomuch that a man might then see cities lie full of  
 mens bodies, the old there lying together with the young,  
 and the dead bodies of women cast out naked, without all  
 reverence of that sex, in the open streets,” &c. Likewise  
 Orosius, *lib. 7.* writing of the said Nero, saith, that he  
 was the first which in Rome did raise up persecution a-  
 gainst

gainst the Christians; and not only in Rome, but also through all the provinces thereof, thinking to abolish and to destroy the whole name of Christians in all places, &c. Whereunto accordeth moreover the testimony of Hierome upon Daniel, saying, "That many there were of the Christians in those days, which seeing the filthy abominations and intolerable cruelty of Nero, thought that he should be Antichrist," &c.

In this persecution, among many other saints, the blessed apostle Peter was condemned to death, and crucified, as some do write, at Rome; albeit other some, and not without cause, do doubt thereof: concerning whose life and history, because it is sufficiently described in the text of the gospel, and in the Acts of St Luke, chap. iv. v. xii. I need not here to make any great repetition thereof. As touching the cause and manner of his death, divers there be which make relation, as Hierome, Egesippus, Eusebius, Abdias, and others, although they do not all precisely agree in the time. The words of Hierome be these. "Simon Peter, the son of Jona, of the province of Galilee, and of the town of Bethsaida, the brother of Andrew, &c. after he had been bishop of the church of Antioch, and had preached to the dispersion of them that believed, of the circumcision, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, in the second year of Claudius the emperor, (which was about the year of our Lord forty and four), came to Rome to withstand Simon Magus, and there kept the priestly chair the space of five and twenty years, until the last year of the aforesaid Nero, which was the fourteenth year of his reign, of whom he was crucified, his head being down, and his feet upward, himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was," &c. Egesippus prosecuting this matter something more at large, and Abdias also, (if any authority is to be given to his book, who following not only the sense, but also the very form of words of Egesippus in his history, seemeth to be extracted out of him, and of other authors), saith, that "Simon Magus being then a great man with Nero, and his president, and keeper of his life, was required upon a time to be present at the raising up of a certain noble young man

man in Rome, of Nero's kindred, lately departed; whereas Peter also was desired to come to the reviving of the said personage. But when Magus, in the presence of Peter, could not do it, then Peter calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus, did raise him up, and restored him to his mother, whereby the estimation of Simon Magus began greatly to decay, and to be detested in Rome. Not long after the said Magus threatened the Romans that he would leave the city, and in their sight fly away from them into heaven. So the day being appointed, Magus taking his wings in the mount Capitolinus, began to fly in the air: but Peter, by the power of the Lord Jesus, brought him down with his wings headlong to the ground; by the which fall, his legs and joints were broken, and he thereupon died. Then Nero, sorrowing for the death of him, sought matter against Peter to put him to death. Which, when the people perceived, they intreated Peter with much ado that he would fly the city. Peter, through their importunity at length persuaded, prepared himself to avoid; but coming to the gate, he saw the Lord Christ come to meet him, to whom he worshipping said, Lord, whither dost thou go? To whom he answered and said, I am come again to be crucified. By this Peter perceiving his suffering to be understood, returned back into the city again; and so was he crucified in manner as is before declared." And this out of Egesippus.

Eusebius, moreover, writing of the death not only of Peter, but also of his wife, affirmeth, that Peter, seeing his wife going to her martyrdom, (belike as he was yet hanging upon the cross), was greatly joyous and glad thereof, who crying unto her with a loud voice, and calling her by her name, bade her remember the Lord Jesus. Such was then (saith Eusebius) the blessed bond of marriage among the saints of God. And thus much of Peter.

Paul the apostle, which before was called Saul, after his great travel, and unspeakable labours, in promoting the gospel of Christ, suffered also in this first persecution under Nero, and was beheaded. Of whom thus writeth Hierome, in his book *De viris illustribus*: "Paul, otherwise called Saul, one of the apostles, yet out of the number of the twelve, was of the tribe of Benjamin, and of a town



town of Jewry called Giscalis; which town being taken of the Romans, he, with his parents, fled to Tarsus, a town of Cilicia; afterward was sent up by his parents to Jerusalem, and there brought up in the knowledge of the law; at the feet of Gamaliel, and was a doer at the death of Stephen. And when he had received letters from the high priest to persecute the Christians, by the way going to Damascus, he was stricken down of the Lord's glory, and of a persecutor was made a professor, an apostle, a martyr, a witness of the gospel, and a vessel of election.

Among his other manifold labours and travels in spreading the doctrine of Christ, he won Sergius Paulus the proconsul of Cyprus, to the faith of Christ; whereupon he took his name, as some suppose, turned from Saulus to Paulus. After he had passed through divers places and countries in his laborious peregrinations, he took to him Barnabas, and went up to Jerusalem to Peter, James, and John, where he was ordained, and sent out with Barnabas to preach unto the Gentiles.

And because it is in the Acts of the apostles sufficiently comprehended, concerning the admirable conversion, and conversation of this most worthy apostle, that which remaineth of the rest of his history, I will here add, how the said apostle Paul, the five and twentieth year after the passion of the Lord, in the second year of Nero, at what time Festus ruled in Jewry, was sent up in bonds to Rome, where he remaining in his free hostery two years together, disputed daily against the Jews, proving Christ to be come. And here it is to be noted, that after his first answer or purgation there made at Rome, the emperor Nero, not yet fully confirmed in his empire, and yet not bursting out into those mischiefs which histories report of him, he was at that time by Nero discharged, and dismissed to preach the gospel in the west parts, and about the coasts of Italy, as he himself writing unto Timothy afterward, in his second apprehension, in his second epistle, witnesseth, saying, *In my first purgation no man stood with me, but did all forsake me, the Lord lay it not to their charge: but the Lord stood with me, and did comfort me, that the preaching of his word might proceed by me, and that all the*  
Gentiles

*Gentiles might hear and be taught : and I was delivered out of the lions mouth, &c.* 2 Tim. iv. In which place by the lion, he plainly meaneth Nero. And afterwards likewise he saith, *I was delivered from the mouth of the lion, &c.* And again, *The Lord hath delivered me out from all evil works, and hath saved me unto his heavenly kingdom, &c.* ; speaking this, because he perceived then the time of his martyrdom to be near at hand : for in the same epistle before, he saith, *I am now offered up, and the time of my dissolution draweth on.*

Thus then, this worthy preacher and messenger of the Lord, in the fourteenth year of Nero, and the same day in which Peter was crucified, (although not in the same year, as some write, but in the next-year following), was beheaded at Rome for the testimony of Christ, and was buried in the way of Ostia, the seven and thirtieth year after the passion of the Lord. He wrote nine epistles to seven churches, to the Romans one, to the Corinthians two, to the Galatians one, to the Ephesians one, to the Philip-pians one, to the Colossians one, to the Thessalonians two. Moreover, he wrote to his disciples, to Timothy two, to Titus one, to Philemon one.

The epistle which beareth the title to the Hebrews, is not thought to be his, for the difference of the stile and phrase ; but either judged to be written of Timothy, as Tertullian supposeth ; or of St Luke, as others think ; or else of Clement, afterward bishop of Rome, who, as they say, was adjoined with Paul, and compiling together his sayings and sentences, did phrase them in his stile and manner. Or else, as some do judge, because St Paul wrote unto the Hebrews, for the odiousness of his name among that people, therefore he dissembled and confessed not his name in the first entry of his salutation, contrary to his accustomed condition. And as he wrote to the Hebrews, he being an Hebrew, so he wrote in Hebrew, that is, his own tongue, more eloquently. And that is thought to be the cause why it differeth from his other epistles, and is after a more eloquent manner translated into the Greek, than his other epistles be. Some also read the epistle written to Laodicea,

Laodicea, but that is exploded of all men." Thus much Hierome.

As touching the time and order of the death and martyrdom of St Paul, as Eusebius, Hierome, Marimus, and other authors, do but briefly pass it over; so Abdias, (if his book be of any substantial authority), speaking more largely of the same, doth say, "That after the crucifying of Peter, and the ruin of Simon Magus, Paul yet remaining in free custody, was dismissed and delivered at that time from martyrdom by God's permission, that all the Gentiles might be replenished with preaching of the gospel by him."

And the same Abdias proceeding in his story, declareth moreover, that as Paul was thus occupied at Rome, he was accused to the emperor, not only for teaching new doctrine, but also for stirring up sedition against the empire. For this he being called before Nero, and demanded to shew the order and manner of his doctrine, there declared what his doctrine was, To teach all men peace and charity, how to love one another, how to prevent one another in honour; rich men not to be puffed up in pride, nor to put their trust in their treasures, but in the living God; mean men to be contented with food and raiment, and with their present state; poor men to rejoice in their poverty with hope; fathers to bring up their children in the fear of God; children to obey their parents; husbands to love their wives; wives to be subject to their husbands; citizens and subjects to give their tribute unto Cesar, and to be subject to their magistrates; masters to be courteous, not churlish to their servants; servants to deal faithfully with their masters: and this to be the sum of his teaching. Which his doctrine he received not of men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ, and the Father of glory, which spake to him from heaven, the Lord Jesus saying to him, that he should go and preach his name, and that he would be with him, and would be the spirit of life to all that believed in him, and that whatsoever he did or said, he would justify it, &c. After that Paul had thus declared unto the emperor, shortly after sentence of death was pronounced against him, that he should be beheaded. Unto whose execution



execution then Nero sent two of his esquires, Ferega and Parthemius, to bring him word of his death. They coming to Paul, instructing then the people, desired him to pray for them, that they might believe; who told them, that shortly after they should believe, and be baptized at his sepulchre, (as Abdias writeth). This done, the soldiers came and led him out of the city to the place of execution, where he, after his prayers made, gave his neck to the sword. Abdias reporteth, that as his head was stricken off, instead of blood issued out white milk; and that at laying down his head, he signed himself with the sign of a cross in his forehead. But this being found in no other history, Abdias seemeth either to add of his own, or else to borrow out of the Legend, as he doth many other things beside, whereof more shall be said (Christ willing) hereafter: although the same miracle of milk flowing out of his neck, is referred also unto Ambrose, who in his sermon threescore and eight (if it be not counterfeited) seemeth to affirm the same. Of the time and year when the blessed apostles did suffer, histories do not all agree. They that follow the common opinion, and the Popes decrees, say, that both Peter and Paul suffered both in one day, and in one year; which opinion seemeth to be taken out of Dionysius bishop of Corinth. Hierome, in his book *De viris illustr.* affirmeth that they both suffered in one day, but he expresseth not the year. So doth Isidorus and Eusebius. Simon Metaphrastes bringeth in the opinion of some, which think that Paul suffered not with Peter, but after Peter. Prudentius, in his *Peristephano*, noteth, that they both were put to death upon the same day, but not in the same year, and saith, that Paul followed Peter a year after.

Abdias, above mentioned, recordeth that Paul suffered two years after Peter. Moreover, if it be true which Abdias saith, that after the crucifying of Peter, Paul remained in his fair custody at Rome, mentioned in the Acts of the apostles, which was, as Hierome witnesseth, the third or fourth year of Nero, then must it be ten years betwixt the martyrdom of Peter and of Paul, forasmuch as it is by all writers confessed, that Paul suffered the fourteenth year, which was the last year of Nero. And so Abdias seemeth

neither to agree with other authors, nor with himself. And thus much of the first persecution.

### The second Persecution.

*Anno 69.* **T**HE first Roman persecution beginning under Nero, as is aforesaid, ceased under Vespasianus, who gave some rest to the poor Christians. After whose reign was moved, not long after, the second persecution, by the emperor Domitian, brother of Titus. Of whom Eusebius and Orosius so write, that he first beginning mildly, afterward did so far outrage in pride intolerable, that he commanded himself to be worshipped as God, and that images of gold and silver in his honour should be set up in Capitolio. The chiefeest nobles of the senators, either upon envy, or for their goods, he caused to be put to death, some openly, and some he sent into banishment, there causing them to be slain privily.

And as his tyranny was unmeasurable, so the intemperancy of his life was no less. He put to death all the nephews of Juda, called the Lord's brother, and caused to be fought out and to be slain all that could be found of the stock of David, (as Vespasian also did before him), for fear lest he were yet to come of the house of David, which should enjoy the kingdom. In the time of this persecutor, Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, after other torments, was crucified to death, whom Justus afterward succeeded in that bishoprick.

In this persecution, John the apostle and evangelist was exiled by the said Domitianus into Pathmos. Of whom divers and sundry memorable acts be reported in sundry chronicles. As first, how he was put in a vessel of boiling oil, by the proconsul of Ephesus. The Legend and Perionius say, it was done at Rome. Isidorus also writing of him, and comprehending many things in few words, declareth, that he turned certain places of wood into gold, and stones by the sea-side into margarites, to satisfy the desire of two, whom he had before persuaded to renounce their riches; and afterward they repenting, that for world-ly

ly treasure they had lost heaven, for their sakes again he changed the same into their former substance: also how he raised up a widow and a certain young man from death to life: how he drank poison, and it hurt him not; raising also to life two which had drunk the same before. These, and such other miracles, although they may be true, and are found in Isidorus, and other writers more; yet because they are no articles of our Christian belief, I let them pass, and only content myself with that which I read in Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 10.* declaring of him in this wise: "That, in the fourteenth year after Nero, in the second persecution, in the days of Domitian, *Anno 97.* John was banished into Pathmos for the testimony of the word, in the year fourscore and seventeen. And after the death of the aforesaid Domitian, he being slain, and his acts repealed by the senate, John was again released under Pertinax the emperor, and came to Ephesus in the year one hundred; where he continued until the time of Trajanus, and there governed the churches in Asia, where also he wrote his gospel; and so lived till the year after the passion of our Lord threescore and eight, which was the year of his age one hundred and twenty."

Moreover, in the aforesaid ecclesiastical story of Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 23.* we read, that John the apostle and evangelist, whom the Lord did love, was in Asia, where he being returned out of Pathmos, after the death of Domitian, governed the churches and congregations. Irenæus in his second book thus writeth: "And of him all the elders do witness, which were with John the disciple of the Lord in Asia, that he spake and wrote these things, &c.; for there he continued with them unto the time of Trajanus," &c. Also the said Irenæus, *lib. 3. hypotes.* in like words declareth, saying, "The church of the Ephesians being first founded by Paul, afterward being confirmed of John, (who continued in the same city unto the time of Trajanus the emperor), is a true witness of this apostolical tradition," &c. Clemens Alexandrinus moreover noteth both the time of this holy apostle, and also addeth to the same a certain history of him, not unworthy to be remembered of such which delight in things honest and profitable; of the



which history Sozomenus also in his commentaries maketh mention. The words of the author setting forth this history be these: "Hear a fable, and not a fable, but a true report, which is told us of John the apostle, delivered and commended to our remembrance. After the death of the tyrant, when John was returned to Ephesus, from the isle of Pathmos, he was desired to resort to the places bordering near unto him, partly to constitute bishops, partly to dispose the causes and matters of the church, partly to ordain and set such of the clergy in office, whom the Holy Ghost should elect. Whereupon, when he was come to a certain city not far off, the name of which also many do yet remember, and had among other things comforted the brethren, he, looking more earnestly upon him which was the chief bishop among them, beheld a young man mighty in body, and of beautiful countenance, and of a fervent mind: I commend this man (saith he) to thee with great diligence, in witness here of Christ and of the church.

"When the bishop had received of him this charge, and had promised his faithful diligence therein; again, the second time John spake unto him, and desired him in like manner and contestation as before. This done, John returned again to Ephesus. The bishop receiving the young man, commended and committed to his charge, brought him home, kept him, and nourished him, and at length also did illuminate, that is, he baptized him, and in short time through his diligence brought him into such order and towardness, that he committed unto him the oversight of a certain cure in the Lord's behalf. The young man thus having more his liberty, it chanced that certain of his companions and old familiars being idle, dissolute, and accustomed of old time to wickedness, did join in company with him, who first brought him to sumptuous and riotous banquets; then incited him forth with them in the night to rob and steal; after that, he was allured by them unto greater mischief and wickedness: wherein, by custom of time, by little and little, he being more practised, and being of a good wit, and a stout courage, like unto a wild, or an unbroken horse, leaving the right way, and running at large without bridle, was carried headlong to the profundity of all disorder and outrage. And thus, being past  
all

all hope of grace, utterly forgetting and rejecting the whole some doctrine of salvation, which he had learned before, began to set his mind upon no small matters. And forasmuch as he was entered so far in the way of perdition, he cared not how further he proceeded in the same. And so associating unto him the company of his companions, and fellow-thieves, took upon him to be as head and captain among them, in committing all kind of murder and felony.

“In the mean time it chanced that of necessity John was sent for to those quarters again, and came. The causes being decided, and his business ended for the which he came, by the way meeting with the bishop afore specified, he requireth of him the pledge, which, in the witness of Christ and of the congregation then present, he left in his hands to keep. The bishop something amazed at the words of John, supposing he had meant of some money committed to his custody, which he had not received, (and yet durst not mistrust John, nor contrary his words), could not tell what to answer. Then John perceiving his doubting, and uttering his mind more plainly; The young man, (saith he), and the soul of our brother committed to your custody, I do require. Then the bishop with a loud voice sorrowing and weeping said, He is dead. To whom John said, How, and by what death? The other said, He is dead to God, for he is become an evil man and pernicious, to be brief, a thief; and now he doth frequent this mountain, with a company of villains and thieves like unto himself, against the church. But the apostle rent his garments, and with a great lamentation said, I have left a good keeper of my brother's soul; get me a horse, and let me have a guide with me; which being done, his horse and man procured, he hasted from the church as much as he could, and coming to the same place was taken of thieves that watched. But he, neither flying nor refusing, said, I came for this same cause hither, lead me, said he, to your captain. So he being brought, the captain all armed, fiercely began to look upon him; and as soon as coming to the knowledge of him, was stricken with confusion and shame, and began to fly. But the old man followed him as much as he might, forgetting his age, and crying, My son, why dost thou

thou fly from thy father? an armed man from one naked? a young man from an old man? Have pity on me, my son, and fear not, for there is yet hope of salvation, I will make answer for thee unto Christ, I will die for thee, if need be; as Christ hath died for us, I will give my life for thee; believe me, Christ hath sent me. He hearing these things, first as in a maze stood still, and therewith his courage was abated. After that he had cast down his weapons, by and by he trembled, yea, and wept bitterly; and coming to the old man, embraced him, and spake unto him with weeping, (as well as he could), being even then baptized afresh with tears, only his right hand being hid and covered. Then the apostle, after that he had promised and firmly ascertained him that he should obtain remission of our Saviour, and also prayed, falling down upon his knees, and kissed his murdering right hand, which for shame he durst not shew before, as now purged through repentance, brought him to the congregation. And when he had prayed for him with continual prayer and daily fastings, and had comforted and confirmed his mind with many sentences, went not from him (as the author reporteth) before he had restored him to the congregation again, and made him a great example and trial of regeneration, and a token of the visible resurrection."

Moreover, the aforesaid Irenæus, *lib. 3. cap. 3.* and Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 28.* and *lib. 4. cap. 14.* prosecuting the history of John, declare in these words, saying, "That there were certain which heard Polycarpus say, that John the disciple of our Lord going into Ephesus to be washed, seeing Cerinthus within, he leaped out of the bath unbathed, because he feared the bath should have fallen, seeing that Cerinthus, an enemy to the truth, was within. Such fear had the apostles, (saith Irenæus), that they would not communicate a word with them that adulterate the truth."

And forasmuch as we are here in hand with the story of John the blessed evangelist, here cometh in matter and occasion not given by him, but taken of others, of a great doubt and difficulty, such as hath occupied all the catholic, subtle, illuminate, and seraphical doctors of the Pope's catholic church, these five hundred years. The difficulty

is



is this: That for so much as auricular confession hath been, and is yet received in the Pope's catholic church for an holy and necessary sacrament, extending universally to all and singular creatures, Christian; here then ariseth a question, Who was our lady's confessor, or ghostly father? But that is decreed and confessed, with full consent of all the catholics, to be St John. Whosoever denieth, or doubteth of this, is straightways *ipso facto* an heretic. This then so determined, ariseth another question or doubt, That seeing our lady was without all original sin, and also actual or mortal; what need then had she of any confessor? or what should she confess unto him? for if she had confessed any sin, when she had none, then had she made herself a liar, and so had sinned indeed. Here therefore (gentle reader) in this perplexity these our illuminate doctors stand in need of thine aid to help at a pinch. Magnus Albertus, the great divine, denieth not, but that she indeed, although most pure, yet was confessed to her ghostly father, to keep the observance of the law, appointed for such as had that need, which she had not: and therefore (saith he) necessary it was that she should confess with mouth. But then here is to be asked, What did she say in her confession, when she had nothing to confess? To this Albertus answereth again, and telleth us plainly what she said in her confession; which was this, That she had received that great grace, not *ex condigno*, that is, not of any dignity of her own, but yet notwithstanding of congruity. And this was it (saith Albert) that she said in her confession. *Albert. cap. 74. super evang. missus est, &c.*

Moreover, to help this case out of all doubt, cometh in famous Thomas of Watring, and thus looseth the knor, much after like effect, saying, "That as Christ, although he did owe nothing to the law, yet notwithstanding received circumcision, to give to others example of humility and obedience; in like manner would our lady shew herself obedient to the observance of the law, albeit there was no cause why she had any need thereof." And thus hast thou (gentle reader) this doubtful question moved and soluted; to the intent I would reveal to thee some part of the deep divinity

divinity of our catholic masters, that have ruled and governed the church in these their late Popish days.

But breaking off this matter, I return again where we left, that is, to this foresaid second persecution under Domitianus. In which persecution, besides these afore mentioned, and many other innumerable godly martyrs, suffering for the like testimony of the Lord Jesus, was Flavia, the daughter of Flavius Clemens, one of the Roman consuls; which Flavia, with many others, was banished out of Rome into the isle Pontia, for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, by the emperor Domitianus. *Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 19.*

This Domitianus feared the coming of Christ, as Herod did, and therefore commanded them to be killed which were of the stock of David in Jewry. There were remaining alive at that time certain of the Lord's kindred, which were the nephews of Jude, that was called the Lord's brother after the flesh. These, when the lieutenant of Jewry had brought up to Domitian to be slain, the emperor demanded of them, Whether they were of the stock of David? Which when they had granted, he asked again, What possessions, and what substance they had? They answered, That they both had no more between them in all, but nine and thirty acres of ground; and how they got their living, and sustained their families with the hard labours of their hands, shewing forth their hands unto the emperor, being hard and rough, worn with labours, to witness that to be true which they had spoken. Then the emperor inquiring of them concerning the kingdom of Christ, what manner of kingdom it was, how, and when it should appear? They answered, That his kingdom was no worldly nor terrene thing, but an heavenly and angelical kingdom, and that it should appear in the consummation and end of the world; what time he coming in glory, should judge the quick and the dead, and render to every one according to his deservings. Domitian the emperor hearing this, (as the saying is), did not condemn them; but despising them as vile persons, let them go, and also staid the persecution then moved against the Christians. They, being thus discharged and dismissed, afterward had the government of churches, being taken for martyrs, and as of the Lord's stock, and so continued

nued in good peace till the time of Trajanus. *Hæc Egesip. & Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 20.*

By this story here recited, may appear, what were the causes why the emperors of the Roman monarchy did so persecute the Christians; which causes were chiefly these, fear and hatred. First, Fear; for that the emperors and senate, of blind ignorance, not knowing the manner of Christ's kingdom, feared and misdoubted lest the same would subvert their empire, (like as the Pope thinketh now that this gospel will overthrow his kingdom of majesty), and therefore sought they all means possible, how, by death, and all kinds of torments, utterly to extinguish the name and memory of the Christians. And thereupon seemeth to spring the old law of the Roman senate, *Non debere demitti Christianos, qui semel ad tribunal venissent, nisi propositum mutent*; that is, "That the Christians should not be let go, which were once brought to the judgment-seat, except they changed their purpose," &c. *Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 21.* Secondly, Hatred; partly for that this world, of its own natural condition, hath ever hated and maliced the people of God, from the first beginning of the world. Partly again, for that the Christians being of a contrary nature and religion, serving only the true living God, despised their false gods, spake against their idolatrous worshippings, and many times stopped the power of Satan, working in their idols. And therefore Satan, the prince of this world, stirred up the Roman princes, and blind idolaters, to bear the more hatred and spite against them.

Upon these causes, and such like, rose up these malicious slanders, false surmises, infamous lies, and slanderous accusations of the Heathen idolaters against the Christian servants of God, which incited the princes of this world the more to persecute them: for what crimes soever malice could invent, or rash suspicion could minister, that was imputed to the Christians; as, that they were a people incestuous; that in the night, in their concourses, putting out their candles, they ran together in all filthy manner; that they killed their own children; that they used to eat man's flesh; that they were seditious and rebellious; that they would not swear by the fortune and prosperity of Cæsar; that they



would not adore the image of Cesar in the market-place; that they were pernicious to the empire of Rome. Briefly, whatsoever mishappened to the city or provinces of Rome, either famine, pestilence, earthquake, wars, wonders, unseasonableness of weather, or what other evils soever happened, it was imputed to the Christians, as Justinus recordeth. Over and beside all these, a great occasion that stirred up the emperors against the Christians, came by one Publius Tarquinius, the chief prelate of the idolatrous sacrifices, and Mamertinus, the chief governor of the city in the time of Trajanus; who, partly with money, partly with sinister and pestilent council, partly with infamous accusations, (as witnesseth Nauclerus), incensed the mind of the emperor so much against God's people.

Also among these other causes above said, crept in some piece of covetousness withal, (as in all other things it doth), in that the wicked promoters and accusers, for lucre's sake, to have the possessions of the Christians, were the more ready to accuse them, to have the spoil of their goods.

Thus hast thou, (Christian reader), first, the causes declared of these persecutions; secondly, the cruel law of their condemnation; thirdly, now hear more what was the form of inquisition, which was (as is witnessed in the second apology of Justinus) to this effect; That they should swear to declare the truth, whether they were in very deed Christians or not; and if they confessed, then by the law the sentence of death proceeded. *Iust. apol. 2.*

Neither yet were these tyrants and organs of Satan thus contented with death only, to bereave the life from the body. The kinds of death were divers, and no less horrible than divers. Whatsoever the cruelty of man's invention could devise for the punishment of man's body, was practised against the Christians, as partly I have mentioned before, and more appeareth by the epistle sent from the brethren of France, hereafter following: crafty trains, outcries of enemies, imprisonments, stripes, and scourgings, drawings, tearings, stonings, plates of iron laid upon them burning hot, deep dungeons, racks, strangling in prisons, the teeth of wild beasts, gridirons, gibbets and gallows, tossing upon the horns of bulls. Moreover, when they were

were thus killed, their bodies were laid in heaps, and dogs there left to keep them, that no man might come to bury them; neither would any prayer obtain them to be interred and buried. *Ex epistola fratrum Viennensium ac Lugdunensium, &c.*

And yet notwithstanding for all these continual persecutions, and horrible punishments, the church of the Christians daily increased, deeply rooted in the doctrine of the apostles, and of men apostolical, and watered plenteously with the blood of saints, as saith *Niceph. lib. 3. cap. 22.* Whereof let us hear the worthy testimony of Justinus Martyr, in his dialogue with Tripheus: "And that none (saith he) can terrify or remove us which believe in Jesus, by this it daily appeareth; for when we are slain, crucified, cast to wild beasts, into the fire, or given to other torments, yet we go not from our confession; but contrary, the more cruelty and slaughter is wrought against us, the more they be that come to piety and faith by the name of Jesus: no otherwise than if a man cut the vine-tree, the better the branches grow; for the vine-tree, planted by God, and Christ our Saviour, is his people." *Hæc Iust.*

To comprehend the names and number of all the martyrs that suffered in all these ten persecutions, (which are innumerable), as it is impossible, so it is hard, in such a variety and diversity of matter, to keep such a perfect order and course of years and times, that either some be not left out, or that every one be reduced into his right place; especially seeing the authors themselves, whom in this present work we follow, do diversly disagree both in the times, in the names, and also in the kind of martyrdom of them that suffered. As for example, where the common reading and opinion of the church and epistles-decretal do take Anacletus to succeed after Clement, next before Evaristus; contrary, Eusebius, *lib. 3. and lib. 5. cap. 6.* making no mention of Cletus, but of Anacletus, saith, that Evaristus succeeded next to Clement. Likewise Rufinus and Epiphanius, speaking nothing of Anacletus, make mention of Linus, and of Cletus, next before Clement, but say nothing of Anacletus; whereby it may appear, that Cletus and Ana-

cletus were both one. Sabellicus, *Ænead. 7. lib. 2.* speaketh of Linus and of Cletus, and saith, that they were ordained helpers under Peter, while he laboured in his apostleship abroad; and so saith also Marianus Scotus; contrary, Irenæus, *lib. 3. contra hæres.* speaketh of Anacletus, making no mention of Cletus. Whereby it may appear, by the way, what credit is to be given to the decretal-epistles, whom all the latter histories of the Pope his church do follow on this behalf, &c. Moreover, where Antoninus, Vincentius, Jacobus in *supplemento*, Simoneta, Aloisius, with others, declare of Linus, Cletus, Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, Alexander, bishops of Rome, that they died martyrs; Eusebius, in his ecclesiastical history, writing of them, maketh thereof no mention.

And, first, as touching Clement, (whom Marianus Scotus calleth the first bishop of Rome after Peter), they say, that he was sent out into banishment of Trajanus, beyond Ponticus, with two thousand Christians, where he opened a well-spring to them which in the wilderness were condemned to the mines. Afterward being accused to the emperor, he was thrown into the sea with a millstone fastened about his neck, and not long after, his body was cast up and buried (as Platina saith) at the place where the well was made. Some say it was found first in the days of Pope Nicholas I. *Fascicul. tempor.* But forasmuch as I find of his martyrdom no firm relation in the ancient authors, but only in such new writers of latter times, which are wont to paint out the lives and histories of good men, with feigned additions of forged miracles, therefore I count the same of less credit, as I do also certain decretal-epistles, untruly (as may seem) ascribed and intitled to his name. Eusebius, in his third book, writing of Clement, giveth no more of him but thus: After he had governed the church of Rome nine years, the said Clement left the succession thereof to Evaristus.

Of which Evaristus, next bishop of Rome, thus we find in Irenæus, *lib. 3. cap. 3.* "Peter and Paul (saith he) committed the charge of that church to Linus; after whom came Anacletus, then succeeded Clement, next to Clement followed Evaristus, after whom came Alexander, and then Sixtus,



Sixtus, the sixth bishop of Rome after the apostles ; after Sixtus sat Telesphorus, then Higinus, then Pius, then Anicetus. And when Soter took the place after him, then the twelfth bishop of Rome was Eleutherius. Thus after Clement followed (as is said) Evaristus, in the second or third year of Trajanus, as saith Eusebius ; or, as Nicephorus saith, the fourth year of the said emperor. But howsoever the count of years standeth, little or nothing remaineth of the acts and monuments either of this, or of other bishops of Rome in those days. Whereby it may appear, that no great account was then made of Roman bishops in those days, whose acts and deeds were then either so lightly reputed, or so slenderly committed to history. Notwithstanding, certain decretal-epistles are remaining, or rather thrust upon us in their names, containing in them little substance of any doctrine, but altogether stuffed with laws, injunctions, and stately decrees, little to the purpose, and less favouring of the nature of that time than present ; amongst whom also are numbered the two epistles of this Evaristus.

And when he had given these orders, and had made six priests, two deacons, and five bishops for sundry places, (saith the story), he suffered martyrdom. But what kind of death, for what cause he suffered, what constancy he shewed, what was the order or conversation of his life, is nothing touched, and seemeth therefore the more to be doubted that which our new histories do say ; because the old ancient writers have no remembrance thereof, which otherwise would not have passed such things over in silence, if they had been true. Again, neither do the authors fully agree in the time of his martyrdom, which Naucerus witnesseth to be in the last year of Trajanus ; but Platina thinketh rather that he suffered under Hadrianus. *Eusebius* *temporum* referreth it to the third year of Hadrian ; Volateranus to the beginning of the reign of Hadrian. Contrary, Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 24.* coming near to the simple truth, (as seemeth), doth affirm, that Evaristus succeeded Clement in the third year of Trajanus ; and so giving to him nine years, it should follow thereby, that Evaristus deceased the twelfth year of Trajanus.

After

After whom succeeded next Alexander in the governance of that church, of whose time and death the like discrepance is among the writers. Marianus Scotus saith he was the fourth bishop from Peter. But that could not be, Some say he was the sixth, and some the seventh. But they likewise were deceived; for the most part all do grant Sixtus to be the sixth. Damasus affirmeth, that he was in the reign of Trajanus. And how can that be, when the said Damasus affirmed before, that Evaristus his predecessor suffered in the last year of Trajanus, and then the bishoprick stood at least a month void; except he mean, that the said Alexander succeeded Evaristus in the last year of Trajanus. But then how can that stand with Bede and Marianus Scotus, which say, that he suffered under Trajanus? or with Otho Frisingensis, which saith he suffered the fourth year of Hadrian, when he had been bishop ten years, by the general consent of most writers?

They which write of the deeds and doings of this blessed bishop, as Bergomensis Antoninus, Equilinus, and such as follow them, declare, that he had converted a great part of the senators to the faith of Christ, amongst whom was Hermes, a great man in Rome, whose son being dead, Alexander raised again to life, and likewise restored sight to his maid being blind. Hadrian the emperor then absent, hearing this, sent word to Aurelianus, governor of Rome, to apprehend Alexander, with Eventius and Theodulus, otherwise called Theodorus, as Platina saith, his two deacons, and Hermes, and to commit them to ward with Quirinus the tribune: which being done, as their story recordeth, Alexander, inclosed in a divers prison from Hermes, notwithstanding, by the guiding of an angel through three doors with three locks a-piece, was brought with candle-light to the lodging of Hermes; and so returning to the prison again, cured the daughter of Quirinus his keeper, named Balbina, by reason whereof the said Quirinus, with his whole household, were all baptized, and suffered also for the faith of Christ.

Thus then, (saith the story), about the second year of Hadrian, Aurelianus the ruler took Alexander the bishop, with Hermes, his wife, children, and his whole household,  
to

to the number of one thousand two hundred and fifty, and threw them in prison. And not long after the said Alexander, with Eventius his deacon, and Hermes, and the rest, were burned in a furnace. Theodulus, another deacon of Alexander, seeing and rebuking the cruelty of the tyrant, suffered also the same martyrdom.

Quirinus also the same time (as saith Antoninus) having first his tongue cut out, then his hands and feet, afterward was beheaded and cast to the dogs. Equilinus saith, that he was beheaded, and cast into Tiber, in the reign of the emperor Claudius. But that cannot be; albeit Platina maketh relation but only of Alexander, with his two deacons aforesaid; declaring moreover, that, in the time of this bishop, Saphira of Antioch, and Sabina a Roman, suffered martyrdom.

Florilegus, the author of *Flores historiarum*, affirmeth, that Alexander, bishop of Rome, was beheaded seven miles out of Rome (where he lieth buried) in the year one hundred and five. But that agreeth not with the chronicles above recited. Eusebius recordeth of him no more, but that, in the third year of Hadrian, he ended his life and office, after he had been bishop ten years.

Divers miracles are reported of this Alexander, in the canon-legends, and lives of saints; which as I deny not but they may be true, so because I cannot avouch them by any grave testimony of ancient writers, therefore I dare not affirm them, but do refer them to the authors and patrons thereof, where they are found. Notwithstanding, whatsoever is to be thought of his miracles, this is to be affirmed, and not doubted, but that he was a godly and virtuous bishop.

And as I say of his miracles, the like judgment also I have of the ordinances both of him, and of Evaristus his predecessor, testified in the Pope's decrees by Gratianus, as *Dist. 93. cap. diaconi*, where is said, that Evaristus divided divers titles in the city of Rome to the priests; also ordained in every city seven deacons to associate and assist the bishop in his preaching, both for his defence, and for the witness of truth. Notwithstanding, if probable conjectures might stand against the authority of Gratianus, and his decrees,  
here



here might be doubted, whether this absolute ordination of priests was first forbidden by Evaristus, and whether the intitulation of priests was first by him brought in or not; wherein an instance may be given to the contrary, that this intitulation seemeth to take its first beginning at the council of Chalcedon, and of Pope Urban in the council of Placentia. In the which council of Chalcedon, the words of the canon (making no mention of Evaristus at all) do expressly forbid, that any ecclesiastical person, either priest or deacon, should be ordained absolutely; otherwise the imposition of hands, without some proper title of the party ordained, to stand void and frustrate, &c. And likewise Urbanus, in the council of Placentia, doth decree the same, alledging no name of Evaristus, but the statutes of former councils.

Moreover, in the time of Evaristus, the church then being under terrible persecutions, was divided into no peculiar parishes or cures, whereby any title might rise, but was scattered rather in corners and desarts, where they could best hide themselves. And as the church of Rome in those days was not divided into several parishes or cures, (as I suppose); so neither was then any such open or solemn preaching in churches, that the assistance or testimony of seven deacons either could avail among the multitude of the Heathen, or else needed amongst the Christian secret congregations. Again, the constitution of seven deacons seemeth rather to spring out of the council of Neocesarea, long after Evaristus, where it was appointed, that in every city, were it never so small, there should be seven deacons after the rule. And this rule the said council taketh out of the book of the Acts of the apostles, making no word or mention of Evaristus at all, *Dist. 93. cap. diaconi*. But these (as is said) be but only conjectures, not denying that which is commonly received, but only shewing what may be doubted in their epistles-decretal.

More unlike it seemeth to be true that is recorded and reported of Alexander, whereof we read, *De consecr. dist. 3.* that he should be the first founder and finder of holy water mixt with salt, to purge and sanctify them upon whom it is sprinkled. The words of the distich be these: *Aquam*  
*sale*

*sale conspersam in populis benedicimus, ut ea cuncti aspersi sanctificentur & purificentur; quod omnibus sacerdotibus faciendum esse mandamus, &c.*; that is, "We bless water mixt with salt among the people, that all men being sprinkled therewith, may be sanctified and purified; and this we command all priests to do," &c.

The opinion is also, but how true I have not to affirm, that by him first was ordained water to be mixt with wine in the chalice.

*Item*, That by him was brought in the piece of the mass-canon, beginning, *Qui pridie*, &c. And thus much of these foresaid bishops of Rome, martyred in the days of Trajanus and Hadrian.

### The third Persecution.

**B**ETWEEN the second Roman persecution and the third, was but one year, under the emperor Nerva, after whom succeeded Trajanus; and after him followed the third persecution. So the second *Anno 100.* and the third are noted of some to be both one, having no more difference but one year between them. This Trajanus, if we look well upon his politic and civil governance, might seem (in comparison of others) a right worthy and commendable prince, much familiar with inferiors, and so behaving himself toward his subjects, as he himself would have the prince to be to him, if he himself were a subject. Also he was noted to be a great observer of justice, infomuch that when he ordained any pretor, giving to him the sword, he would bid him use the sword against his enemies in just causes; and if he himself did otherwise than justice, to use then his power against him also. But for all these virtues, toward Christian religion he was impious and cruel, who caused the third persecution of the church. In the which persecution Pliny the second, a man learned and famous, seeing the lamentable slaughter of Christians, and moved therewith to pity, wrote to Trajanus of the pitiful persecution; certifying him, that there were many thousands of them daily put to death, of

which none did any thing contrary to the Roman laws worthy of persecution; saving that they used to gather together in the morning before day, and sing hymns to a certain God, whom they worshipped, called Christ. In all other their ordinances, they were godly and honest. Whereby the persecution, by commandment of the emperor, was greatly staid and diminished. The form and copy of which epistle of Pliny I thought here not inconvenient to set down, as followeth.

*The epistle of Pliny, an Heathen philosopher, to Trajanus the emperor.*

**I**T is my property and manner (my sovereign) to make relation of all those things unto you wherein I doubt; for who can better either correct my slackness, or instruct mine ignorance, than you? I was never yet present myself at the examination and execution of these Christians; and therefore what punishment is to be administered, and how far, or how to proceed in such inquisitions, I am plain ignorant, not able to resolve in the matter, whether any difference is to be had in age and person, whether the young and tender ought to be with like cruelty intreated as the elder and stronger, whether repentance may have any pardon, or whether it may profit him or not, to deny, which hath been a Christian; whether the name only of Christians, without other offences, or whether the offences, joined with the name of a Christian, ought to be punished. In the mean season, as touching such Christians as have been presented unto me, I have kept this order. I have inquired the second and third time of them, whether they were Christians? menacing them with fear of punishment; and such as did persevere, I commanded to execution; for thus I thought, that whatsoever their profession was, yet their stubbornness and obstinacy ought to be punished, whether they were also of the same madness; whom, because they were citizens of Rome, I thought to send them back again to the city. Afterward, in further process and handling of this matter, as the sect did further spread, so the more cases did thereof ensue.

There



There was a libel offered to me bearing no name, wherein were contained the names of many which denied themselves to be Christians, contented to do sacrifice with incense and wine to the gods, and to your image, (which image I for that purpose caused to be brought), and to blaspheme Christ; whereunto none such as were true Christians indeed could be compelled; and those I did discharge and let go. Other some confessed, that they had been Christians, but afterward denied the same, &c. affirming unto me the whole sum of that sect or error to consist in this, that they were wont, at certain times appointed, to convent before day, and to sing certain hymns to one Christ their God, and to confederate among themselves, to abstain from all theft, murder, and adultery, to keep their faith, and to defraud no man; which done, then to depart for that time, and afterward to resort again to take meat in companies together both men and women one with another, and yet without any act of evil.

In the truth whereof to be further certified, whether it were so or not, I caused two maidens to be laid on the rack, and with torments to be examined of the same. But finding no other thing in them, but only lewd and immoderate superstition, I thought to surcease of further inquiry, till time that I might be further advertised in the matter from you; for so the matter seemed unto me worthy and needful of advisement, especially for the great number of those that were in danger of your statute; for very many there were of all ages and states, both men and women, which then were, and more are like hereafter to incur the same peril of condemnation. For that infection hath crept not only into cities, but villages also, and boroughs about, which seemeth that it may be staid and reformed: forasmuch as we see in many places that the temples of our gods, which were wont to be desolate, begin now to be frequented; and that they bring sacrifices from every part to be sold, which before very few were found willing to buy. Whereby it may easily be conjectured, what multitudes of men may be amended, if space and time be given them, wherein they may be reclaimed.

*The epistle of Trajanus to Pliny.*

**T**HE act and statute, my Secundus, concerning the causes of the Christians, which ye ought to follow, ye have rightly executed; for no such general law can be enacted, wherein all special cases particularly can be comprehended. Let them not be sought for; but if they be brought and convicted, then let them suffer execution: so notwithstanding, that whosoever shall deny himself to be a Christian, and do it unfeignedly in open audience, and do sacrifice to our gods, howsoever he hath been suspected before, let him be released, upon promise of amendment. Such libels as have no names, suffice not to any just crime or accusation; for that should give both an evil president, neither doth it agree with the example of our time.

Tertullian writing upon this letter of Trajanus above prefixed, thus saith: "O sentence of a confused necessity! He would not have them to be sought for as men innocent, and yet causeth them to be punished as persons guilty." And thus the rage of that persecution ceased for a time, although notwithstanding many naughty disposed men, and cruel officers there were, which, upon false pretence, to accomplish their wicked minds, ceased not to afflict the Christians in divers provinces; and especially if any occasion were given never so little, for the enemies to take hold of, or if any commotion were raised in the provinces abroad, by and by the fault was laid upon the Christians. As in Jerusalem, after that the emperor Trajanus had sent down his commandment, that whosoever could be found of the stock of David, he should be inquired out, and put to death. Upon this Egesippus writing, saith, "That certain sectaries there were of the Jewish nation, that accused Simeon, the bishop then of Jerusalem, and son of Cleophas, to come of the stock of David, and that he was a Christian." "Of the which his accusers it happened also, (saith the said Egesippus), that certain of them likewise were apprehended  
and

and taken to be of the stock of David, and so right justly were put to execution themselves which sought the destruction of others." As concerning Simeon the blessed bishop, the foresaid Egesippus thus writeth: "That Simeon, the Lord's nephew, when he was accused to Attalus the proconsul, by the malicious sect of the Jews, to be of the line of David, and to be a Christian, was scourged, during the space of many days together, being of age an hundred and twenty years. In which his martyrdom he endured so constant, that both the consul, and all the multitude, did marvel to see him of that age so constantly to suffer; and so at last being crucified, finished his course in the Lord, for whom he suffered;" as partly before also is recorded.

In this persecution of Trajanus above specified, (which Trajanus next followed after Nerva), besides the other before mentioned, also suffered Phocas bishop of Pontus, whom Trajanus, because he would not do sacrifice to Neptuneus, caused to be cast into a hot lime-kiln, and afterward to be put into a scalding bath, where the constant godly martyr, in the testimony of Christ, ended his life, or rather entered into life. *Anton. Equil. Fascic. temporum.*

In the same persecution suffered also Sulpitius and Servilianus, two Romans; whose wives are said to be Euphrosina and Theodora, whom Sabina did convert to the faith of Christ, and after were also martyred. Of which Sabina, Jacobus Philippus, author of the book called *Supplementum*, reporteth, that, in the mount of Aventine in Rome, she was beheaded of Clepidus the governor, in the days of Hadrian. Under whom also suffered Seraphia, a virgin of Antioch, as Hermanus witnesseth.

The forenamed authors, Antoninus and Equilius, make mention moreover of Nereus and Achilleus, who, in this persecution of Trajanus, had the crown of martyrdom, being put to death at Rome. Eusebius, in his fourth book, *cap. 26.* maketh mention of one Sagaris, who about the same time suffered martyrdom in Asia, Servilius Paulus being then proconsul in that province.

In this persecution, besides many others, suffered the blessed martyr of Christ Ignatius, who unto this day is had  
in



in famous reverence among very many. This  
*Anno 111.* Ignatius was appointed to the bishoprick of  
 Antioch next after Peter in succession. Some  
 do say, that he being sent from Syria to Rome, because  
 he professed Christ, was given to the wild beasts to be  
 devoured. It is also said of him, that when he pass-  
 ed through Asia, being under the most strict custody of  
 his guarders, he strengthened and confirmed the parishes  
 through all the cities as he went, both with his exhorta-  
 tions and preaching of the word of God; and admonished  
 them especially, and before all other things, to beware and  
 shun those heresies risen up and sprung newly among them,  
 and that they should cleave and stick fast to the tradition  
 of the apostles; which he, for their better safeguard, being  
 about to denounce or put in writing, thought it a thing  
 very necessary to travel in. And thus when he came to  
 Smyrna, where Polycarpus was, he wrote one epistle to  
 the congregation of Ephesus, wherein he made mention of  
 Onesimus their pastor; and another he wrote to the con-  
 gregation of Magnesia, being at Meandre, wherein also he  
 forgetteth not Dama their bishop. Also another he wrote  
 to the congregation of Trallis, the governor of which city  
 at that time, he noteth to be one Polybius. Unto which  
 congregation he made an exhortation, lest they refusing  
 martyrdom, should lose the hope that they desired.

But it shall be very requisite, that I alledge somewhat  
 thereof, to the declaration of this matter. He wrote there-  
 fore, as the words lie, in this sort. "From Syria, (saith  
 he), even till I came to Rome, had I a battle with beasts,  
 as well by sea as land, both day and night, being bound  
 in the midst of ten cruel Libards, (that is, the company or  
 band of the soldiers), which, the more benefits that they  
 received at my hands, became so much the worse unto me.  
 But I, being exercised and now well acquainted with their  
 injuries, am taught every day more and more: but hereby  
 am I not yet justified. And would to God I were once  
 come to the beasts, which are prepared for me, which also  
 I wish, with gaping mouths, were ready to come upon me,  
 whom also I will provoke, that they without delay may de-  
 vour me, and forbear me nothing at all, as those whom  
 before

before they have not touched or hurt for fear; and if they will not unless they be provoked, I will then inforce them against myself. Pardon me, I pray you. How much beneficial it is to me, I know. Now begin I to be a scholar; I force or esteem no visible things, nor yet invisible things, so that I may get or obtain Christ Jesus. Let the fire, the gallows, the devouring of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the pulling asunder of my members, the bruising or pressing of my whole body, and the torments of the devil, or hell itself, come upon me, so that I may win Christ Jesus."

And these things wrote he from the foresaid city unto the congregations which we have recited. And when he was even now judged to be thrown to the beasts, he spake, for the burning desire that he had to suffer, what time he heard the lions roaring: "I am the wheat or grain (saith he) of Christ, I shall be ground with the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread." He suffered in the eleventh year of Trajanus the emperor. *Hæc Eusebius & Hieronym.*

Besides this godly Ignatius, many thousands also were put to death in the same persecution, as appeareth by the letter of *Plinus secundus* above recited, written unto the emperor. Hierome, in his book intituled, *De viris illustribus*, maketh mention of one Publius, bishop of Athens, who, for the faith of Christ, the same time, during this persecution, was put to death and martyred.

#### Hadrian the Emperor.

**N**EXT after this Trajanus succeeded Hadrian the emperor, under whom suffered Alexander the bishop of Rome, with his two deacons Eventius and Theodorus; also Hermes and Quirinus, with their families, as late before was declared.

It is signified, moreover, in the histories, that, in the time of this Hadrian, Zenon, a nobleman of Rome, with ten thousand three hundred and three, were slain for Christ. *Henricus de Erfordia*, and *Bergomensis*, lib. 8. make mention

tion of ten thousand in the days of this Hadrian to be crucified in the mount Hararath, crowned with crowns of thorns, and thrust into the sides with sharp darts, after the example of the Lord's passion, whose captains (as *Antoninus* and *Vincentius in spec. histor.* declare) were Achaicus, Heliades, Theodorus, and Carcerius, &c. Whether this story be the same with the other above of Zenon or not, it is doubted. As touching the miracles done, and the speaking of the angel, I refer the certainty thereof to *Vincentius*, and such other like authors, where more things seem to be told than to be true.

There was one Eustachius a captain, whom Trajanus in time past had sent out to war against the barbarians. After he had by God's grace valiantly subdued his enemies, and now was returning home with victory; Hadrian for joy, meeting him in his journey to bring him home with triumph, by the way first would do sacrifice to Apollo for the victory gotten, willing also Eustachius to do the same with him. But when Eustachius could by no means there-to be enforced, being brought to Rome, there, with his wife and children, he suffered martyrdom under the fore-said Hadrian. It were a long process here to recite all the miracles contained, or rather suspected in this story, of this Eustachius; concerning his conversion and death; how the crucifix appeared to him between the horns of an hart; of the saving of his wife from the shipmen; of one of his sons saved from the lion, the other saved from the wolf; of their miraculous preservation from the wild beasts, from the torments of fire mentioned in *Bergomensis*, *Vincentius*, and others. All which, as I find them in no ancient records, so I leave them to their authors, and compilers of the Legends.

We read also of Faustinus and Jobita, citizens of the city of Briria, which suffered martyrdom with like grievous torments. At the sight whereof one Calocerius, seeing their so great patience in so great torments, cried out with these words; *Vere magnus Deus Christianorum*; that is, Verily great is the God of Christians; which words being heard, forthwith he was apprehended, and being brought



to the place of their execution, was made partaker of their martyrdom. *Ex Ant. Equilin.*

The history of Nicephorus maketh mention of Anthia, a godly woman, who committed her son Eleutherius to Anicetus, bishop of Rome, to be brought up in the doctrine of Christian faith, who afterwards being bishop in Apulia, was there beheaded, with his foresaid mother Anthia.

Justus also and Pastor, two brethren, with like martyrdom ended their lives in a city of Spain, called Complutum, under the said Hadrian the emperor.

Likewise Symphorissa, the wife of Getulus the martyr, with her seven children, is said about the same time to suffer; who first was much and often beaten and scourged, afterwards was hanged up by the hair of her head; at last having an huge stone fastened unto her, was thrown headlong into the river; and after that her seven children in like manner, with sundry and divers kinds of punishment, diversly martyred by the tyrant.

The story of M. Hermannus, and Antoninus, and others, report of Sophia, with her three children also, also of Seraphia and Sabina, to suffer under the said emperor, about the year of our Lord one hundred and thirty.

As concerning Alexander bishop of Rome, with his two deacons, also with Hermes, Quirinus, Saphira, and Sabina, some writers, as Bede, and Marianus Scotus, record, that they suffered under Trajanus. Others again, as Otto, Frisingensis, with like more, report, that they suffered in the fourth year of this emperor Hadrian. But of these martyrs sufficiently hath been said before.

While Hadrian the emperor was at Athens, he purposed to visit the country of Elufina, and so did; where he sacrificing to the Gentiles gods, after the manner of the Grecians, had given free leave and liberty, whosoever would, to persecute the Christians. Whereupon Quadratus, a man of no less excellent zeal than of famous learning, being then bishop of Athens, and disciple of the apostles, or at least succeeding incontinent the age of the apostles, and following after Publius, (who a little before was martyred for the testimony of Christ), did offer up, and exhibit unto Hadrian the emperor, a learned and excellent apology, in

the defence of the Christian religion; wherein he declared the Christians, without all just cause or desert, to be so cruelly intreated and persecuted, &c. The like also did Aristides, another no less excellent philosopher in Athens, who, for his singular learning and eloquence, being notified to the emperor, and coming to his presence, there made before him an eloquent oration. Moreover, he did exhibit unto the said emperor a memorable apology for the Christians, so full of learning and eloquence, that, as Hierome saith, it was a spectacle and admiration to men in his time, that loved to see wit and learning. Over and besides these, there was also another named Serenus Granius, a man of great nobility, who likewise did write very pithy and grave letters to Hadrian the emperor, shewing and declaring therein that it was consonant with no right nor reason, for the blood of innocents to be given to the rage and fury of the people, and so to be condemned for no fault, only for the name and sect that they followed.

Thus the goodness of God, being moved with the prayers and constant labour of these so excellent men, so turned the heart of the emperor, that he being better informed concerning the order and profession of the Christians, became more favourable unto them. And immediately upon the same directed his letters to Minutius Fundanus, (as is partly before mentioned), proconsul of Asia, willing him from henceforth to exercise no more such extremity against the Christians, as to condemn any of them, having no other crime objected against them but only their name. The copy of which his letter, because that Justin in his apology doth alledge it, I thought therefore to express the same in his own words, as followeth.

*The letter of Hadrian the emperor to Minutius Fundanus.*

I Have received an epistle written unto me from Serenus Granius, our right worthy and well beloved, whose office you do now execute. Therefore I think it not good to leave this matter without further advisement and circumspection to pass, lest our subjects be molested, and malicious

cious sycophants boldened and supported in their evil. Wherefore if the subjects of our provinces do bring forth any accusation before the judge against the Christians, and can prove the thing they object against them, let them do the same, and no more, and otherwise for the name only, not to impeach them, nor to cry out against them; for so more convenient it is, that if any man will be an accuser, you take the accusation quietly, and judge upon the same. Therefore if any shall accuse the Christians, and complain of them as malefactors, doing contrary to the law, then give you judgment according to the quality of the crime. But notwithstanding, whosoever, upon spite and maliciousness, shall commence or cavil against them, see you correct and punish that man for his inordinate and malicious dealing.

Thus, by the merciful providence of God, some more quiet and rest was given to the church, although Hermanus thinketh these Alcoin-days did not very long continue, but that the emperor changing his edict, began to renew again persecution of God's people; albeit this soundeth not to be so by the words of Melito in his apology to Antoninus, hereafter ensuing. In the mean time this is certain, that, in the days of this Hadrian, the Jews rebelled again, and spoiled the country of Palestina. Against whom the emperor sent Julius Severus, who overthrew in Jewry fifty castles, and burnt and destroyed nine hundred and fourscore villages and towns, and slew of the Jews fifty thousand: with famine, sickness, sword, and fire, Judah was almost desolate. But at length Hadrian the emperor, which otherwise was named *Ælius*, repaired and enlarged the city again of Jerusalem, which was called after his name *Æliopolis*, or *Ælia Capitolina*, the inhabitation whereof he granted only to the Gentiles, and to the Christians, forbidding the Jews utterly to enter into the city.

After the death of Hadrian, who died by bleeding at the nose, succeeded Antoninus Pius, about the year of our Lord one hundred and forty, and reigned twenty and three years, who, for his clemency and modest behaviour, had the name of Pius, and is

Anno 140.



for the same in histories commended. His saying was, That he had rather save one citizen, than destroy a thousand of his adversaries. At the beginning of his reign, such was the state of the church, as Hadrian his predecessor had left it, as in which, although there was no edict set forth to persecute the Christians, yet the tumultuous rage of the Heathen multitude, for the causes above specified, did not cease to disquiet and afflict the quiet people of God, imputing and ascribing to the Christians whatsoever misfortune happened contrary unto their desires; moreover inventing against them all false crimes and contumelies whereof to accuse them. By reason whereof, divers there were in sundry places much molested, and some put to death; albeit, as it is to be supposed, not by the consent of the emperor, who of nature was so mild and gentle, that either he raised up no persecution against the Christians, or else he soon staid the same being moved; as well may appear by his letter sent down to the countries of Asia, the tenor wherof here ensueth.

*The epistle of Antoninus Pius to the commons of Asia.*

**E**Mperor and Cesar, Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, Armenicus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune eleven times, Consul thrice, unto the commons of Asia, greeting. I am very certain that the gods have a care of this, that they which be such, shall be known, and not lie hid; for they do punish them that will not worship them more than you, which so fore vex and trouble them, confirming thereby the opinion which they have conceived, and do conceive of you, that is, to be wicked men. For this is their joy and desire, that when they are accused, rather they covet to die for their God, than to live; whereby they are victors, and do overcome you, giving rather their lives, than to be obedient to you, in doing that which you require of them. And here it shall not be inconvenient to advertise you of the earthquakes which have and do happen among us, that when at the sight of them you tremble and are afraid, then you may confer your case with them. For they,  
upon

upon a sure confidence of their God, are bold and fearless much more than you; who in all the time of this your ignorance, both do worship other gods, and neglect the religion of immortality; and such Christians as worship him, them you do drive out, and persecute them unto death. Of these and such like matters, many presidents of our provinces did write to our father, of famous memory heretofore. To whom he directed his answer again, willing them in no case to molest the Christians, except they were found in some trespass prejudicial against the empire of Rome. And to me also many there be which write, signifying their mind in like manner. To whom I have answered again, to the same effect and manner as my father did. Wherefore if any hereafter shall offer any vexation or trouble to such, having no other cause, but only for that they are such, let him that is appeached, be released and discharged free, yea, although he be found to be such, (that is a Christian), and let the accuser sustain the punishment, &c.

This godly edict of the emperor was proclaimed at Ephesus, in the public assembly of all Asia, whereof Melito also, bishop of Sardis, who flourished in the same time, maketh mention in his apology written in defence of our doctrine to M. Antoninus Verus, as hereafter (Christ willing) shall appear. By this means then the tempest of persecution in those days began to be appeased, through the merciful providence of God, which would not have his church utterly to be overthrown, though hardly yet to grow.

### The fourth Persecution.

**A**fter the decease of the foresaid quiet and mild prince Aurelius Antoninus Pius, (who among all other emperors of that time made the most quiet end), followed his son M. Antoninus Verus, with Lucius his brother, about the year of our Lord one hundred threescore and two, a man of nature more stern and severe. *Anno 162.* And although in study of philosophy, and in civil government no less commendable; yet toward the Christians

Christians sharp and fierce, by whom was moved the fourth persecution after Nero. In whose time a great number of them which truly professed Christ, suffered most cruel torments and punishments, both in Asia and France. In the number of whom was Polycarpus, the worthy bishop of Smyrna, who, in the great rage of this persecution in Asia, among many other most constant saints, was also martyred. Of whose end and martyrdom I thought it here not inexpedient to commit to history, so much as Eusebius declareth to be taken out of a certain letter or epistle, written by them of his own church to the brethren of Pontus; the tenor of which epistle here followeth.

“ The congregation which is at Smyrna, to the congregation which is at Philomilium, and to all the congregations throughout Pontus: mercy to you, peace, and the love of God our Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied, Amen. We have written unto you brethren of those men which have suffered martyrdom, and of blessed Polycarpus, which hath ended and appeased this persecution, as it were, by the shedding of his own blood.” And in the same epistle, before they enter into further matter of Polycarpus, they discourse of other martyrs, describing what patience they abode and shewed in suffering their torments, which was so great and admirable, (saith the epistle), that the lookers on were amazed, seeing and beholding how they were so scourged and whipped, that the inward veins and arteries appeared; yea, even so much, that the very intrails of their bodies, their bowels and members, were seen; and after that, were set upon sharp shells taken out of the sea, edged and sharp, and certain nails and thorns for the martyrs to go upon, which were sharpened and pointed, called *obelisci*. Thus suffered they all kind of punishment and torment that might be devised; and, lastly, were thrown unto the wild beasts to be devoured. But especially in the aforesaid epistle, mention is made of one Germanicus, how he most worthily persevered and overcame, by the grace of God, that fear of death which is ingrafted in the common nature of all men, whose notable patience and sufferance was so notable, that the whole multitude wondering at this beloved martyr of God, for this  
his



his so bold constancy, and also for the singular strength and virtue proceeding of the whole multitude of the Christians, began suddenly to cry with a loud voice, saying, "Destroy the wicked men, let Polycarpus be sought for." And whilst a great uproar and tumult began thus to be raised upon those cries, a certain Phrygian, named Quintus, lately come out of Phrygia, seeing and abhorring the wild beasts, and the fierce rage of them, of an over light mind betrayed his own safety. For so the same letter of him doth report, that he, not reverently, but more malipertly than was requisite, together with others, rushed into the judgment-place, and so being taken, was made a manifest example to all the beholders, that no man ought rashly and irreverently, with such boldness, to thrust in himself, to entermeddle in matters wherewith he hath not to do.

But now we will surcease to speak more of them, and return to Polycarpus, of whom the foresaid letter consequently declareth, as followeth: how that, in the beginning, when he heard of these things, was nothing at all afraid, nor disquieted in mind, but purposed to have tarried still in the city, till being persuaded, by the intreaty of them that were about him, (which desired him instantly, that he would convey himself away), hid himself in a grange or village not far off from the city, and there abiding with a few more in his company, did nothing else (night nor day) but abode in supplication, wherein he made his humble petition for the obtaining of peace unto all the congregations throughout the world; for that was his accustomed manner so to do. And as he was thus making his prayers, three days before he was apprehended, in a vision by night, he saw the bed set on fire under his head, and suddenly to be consumed. And when he awaked, he told by and by, and expounded unto them that were present his vision, and told them before what thing should come to pass, that is, how that in the fire he should lose his life for Christ's cause. It is further mentioned, that when they were hard at hand, which so narrowly sought for him, that he was enforced, for the affection and love of his brethren, to fly into another village, to which place notwithstanding, within a little while after, the pursuers came; and

and when they had taken a couple of children that dwelt thereabouts, they so beat one of them with whips, that, by the bewraying or confession of him, they were brought unto the inn where Polycarpus was. And they say, that the pursuers making no great haste to enter, found him in the uppermost place of the house, from whence he might have escaped into other houses, if he would; but this he would not do, saying, The will of God be done. Furthermore, when he knew that they were come, as the said history sheweth, he came down, and spake unto them with a chearful and pleasant countenance, so that it was a wonder to see those which a while ago knew not the man, now beholding and viewing his comely age, and his grave and constant countenance, lamented that they had so much employed their labour, that so aged a man should be apprehended. To conclude, he commanded that straightway, without any delay, the table should be laid for them, and persuaded them that they would eat and dine well, and required of them boldly, that he might have an hour's respite to make his prayers. Which thing, after it was granted, he arose and went to pray, so being replenished with the grace of God, that they which were present, and hearing the prayers that he made, were astonished at it; and now many of them were sorry, that so honest and godly an aged man should be put to death.

After this, the aforesaid epistle or letter, prosecuting the history, addeth more, as followeth: After he had made an end of his prayers, and had called to his remembrance all those things which ever happened unto him, and to the universal catholic church throughout all the world, (whether they were small or great, glorious or else inglorious), and that the hour was now come, in which they ought to set forward, they set him upon an ass, and brought him to the city upon a solemn feast-day. And there met him Irenarchus Herodes, and his father Nicetus, which causing him to come up into the chariot where they sat, persuaded him, and said, What hurt I pray thee, shall come thereof to thee, if thou say, (by the way of salutation), My lord Cesar, and do sacrifice, and thus to save thyself? But he at the beginning made them no answer, till that when they enforced

enforced him to speak, he said, I will not do as ye counsel me I should. When as they saw he could not be persuaded, they gave him very rough language, and of purpose molested him, that in going down the chariot from them, he might hurt or break his legs. But he forcing very light of the matter, as though he had felt no hurt, went merrily and diligently forward, making haste unto the place appointed. And when there was such uproar in the place of execution, that he could not be heard but of very few, there came a voice from heaven to Polycarpus, as he was going into the stage, or appointed place of judgment, saying, Be of good cheer Polycarpus, and play the man. No man there was which saw him that spake, but very many of us heard his voice. And when he was brought in, there was a great noise made by them, which understood that Polycarpus was apprehended. The proconsul asked him when he was come, Whether his name was Polycarpus or not? And when he said, Yea, it was, he gave him counsel to deny his name, and said unto him, Be good unto thyself, and favour thine old age; and many other such like words, which they accustom to speak. Swear, saith he, by the emperor's good fortune, look upon this matter, say thou with us, Destroy these naughty men. Then Polycarpus, beholding with constant countenance the whole multitude, which was in the place appointed, and giving a great sigh, looked up to heaven, saying, Thou, thou it is that wilt destroy these wicked naughty men. And the proconsul thus being earnestly in hand with him, said, Take thine oath, and I will discharge thee, defy Christ. Polycarpus answered, Four-score and six years have I been his servant, yet in all this time hath he not so much as once hurt me; how then may I speak evil of my King and sovereign Lord, which hath thus preserved me? Then the proconsul again enforced him and said, Swear thou, I advise thee, by Cesar's prosperity. Polycarpus replieth, If thou require of me this fond word of vain boasting, feigning not to know (as thou sayst) who I am, I do thee to wit that I am a Christian; and if thou desire to know the doctrine of Christianity, appoint a day, and thou shalt hear. Persuade the people unto this, said the proconsul. Truly, saith Polycarpus, I



have thought it my part thus to say unto you, for so much as we are commanded to give unto the governors and powers ordained of God, the honour meet and due to them, and not hurtful unto us; but as for those, I do judge them unworthy to purge myself unto them. Hereupon the proconsul stood up; I have, saith he, wild beasts, to whom I will throw thee, unless thou take a better way. Whereunto Polycarpus answered, Let them come, we have determined with ourselves, that we will not by repentance turn us from the better way to the worse, but rather convenient it is that a man turn from things that be evil unto that which is good and just. Again, saith the proconsul, I will tame thee with fire, if that thou set not by the wild beasts, nor yet repent. Then said Polycarpus, You threaten me with fire which shall burn for the space of an hour, and shall be within a little while after put out and extinguished; but thou knowest not the fire of the judgment that is to come, and of everlasting punishment, which is reserved for the wicked and ungodly. But why make you all these delays? Give me what death soever ye list. These, and many other such like things being by him spoken, he was replenished with joy and boldness, and his countenance appeared so full of grace and favour, that not only he was not troubled with those things which the proconsul spake unto him, but contrarily the proconsul himself began to be amazed, and sent for the crier, which in the middle of the stage was commanded to cry three times, Polycarpus hath confessed himself to be a Christian; which words of the crier were no-sooner spoken, but all the whole multitude, both of Gentiles and Jews inhabiting at Symrna, with a vehement rage and loud voice, cried, This is that doctor or teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the destroyer of our gods, which hath instructed a great number, that our gods are not to be worshipped; and after this they cried unto Philip the governor of Asia, and required him that he would let loose the lion to Polycarpus. To whom he made answer, That he might not so do, because he had already his prey. Then they cried again all together with one voice, That he would burn Polycarpus alive. For it was requisite that the vision which he saw as concerning  
his

his pillow or bolster, should be fulfilled; which when he had seen burnt, as he was in his prayer, he turned himself unto the faithful sort which were with him, saying, by the way of prophecy, It will so come, that I shall be burned alive. And the proconsul had no sooner spoken, but it was out of hand performed. For why, the multitude by and by brought out of their shops, workhouses, and barns, wood and other dry matter for that purpose, and especially the Jews were most serviceable for that matter, after their wonted manner.

And thus the pile being laid, and when he had now put off his garments, and undone his girdle, and was about to pull off his shoes, which he had not done before, for that all the faithful sort among themselves strived (as it were) who should first touch his body at their farewell, because, for the good conversation of his life, even from his younger age, he was had in great estimation of all men; therefore straightway those instruments which are requisite to such a bonfire, were brought unto him, and when they would have nailed him to the stake with iron hoops, he said, Let me alone as I am; for he that hath given me strength to suffer, and abide the fire, shall also give power, that, without this your provision of nails, I shall abide, and not stir in the midst of this fire or pile of wood. Which thing when they heard, they did not nail him, but bound him. Therefore when his hands were bound behind him, even as the chiefest ram taken out of the flock, he was sacrificed as an acceptable burnt-offering to God, saying, O Father of thy well-beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have attained the knowledge of thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of all just men which live before thee, I give thee thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to grant me this day that I may have my part among the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life, both of body and soul, through the operation of thy holy Spirit; among whom I shall this day be received into thy sight for an acceptable sacrifice: and as thou hast prepared and revealed the same before this time, so thou hast accomplished the same, O thou most true God, which cannot lie. Wherefore I in



like case for all things praise thee, and bleſs thee, and glorify thee, by our everlaſting Biſhop, Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be glory evermore. Amen.

And as ſoon as he had ended this word Amen, and finiſhed his prayer, the tormentors began to kindle the fire, and as the flame ſhaſhed out vehemently, we to whom it was given to diſcern the ſame, ſaw a marvellous matter; which were alſo to this purpoſe preſerved, that we might ſhew the ſame to others. For the fire being made like unto a roof or vault of a houſe, and after the manner of a ſhipman's ſail, filled with wind, compaſſed about the body of the martyr, as with a certain wall, and he, in the middle of the ſame, not as fleſh that burned, but as gold and ſilver when it is tried in the fire. And ſurely we ſmelt a favour ſo ſweet, as if myrrh, or ſome other precious balm, had given a ſcent. At the laſt, when thoſe wicked perſons ſaw that his body could not be conſumed by fire, they commanded one of the tormentors to come unto him, and thruſt him through with his ſword. Which being done, ſo great a quantity of blood ran out of his body, that the fire was quenched therewith, and the whole multitude marvelled that there was ſo much diverſity between the infidels and the elect, of whom this Polycarpus was one, being a diſciple of the apoſtles, and a propheticall inſtructor of our times, and biſhop of the catholic church of Smyrna; for what word ſoever he ſpoke, both it was, and ſhall be accompliſhed. But the ſubtle and envious adverſary, when he ſaw the worthineſs of his martyrdom, and that his converſation, even from his younger years, could not be reprov- ed, and that he was adorned with the crown of martyrdom, and had now obtained that incomparable benefit, gave in charge that we ſhould not take and divide his body, for fear leſt the remnants of the dead corps ſhould be taken away, and ſo worſhipped of the people. Whereupon divers whiſpered Niceta, the father of Herod, and his brother Dalces, in the ear, to admoniſh the proconſul, that in no caſe he ſhould deliver his body, leſt (ſaith he) they leave Chriſt, and begin to worſhip him. And this ſpoke they, becauſe the Jews had given them ſecret warning, and provoked them thereunto; who alſo watched us, that we ſhould



should not take him out of the fire; not being ignorant how that we meant at no time to forsake Christ, which gave his life for the salvation of the whole world, (as many I mean as are elected to salvation by him), neither yet that we could worship any other. For why, him we worship as the Son of God, but the martyrs do we love as disciples of the Lord, (and that worthily), for their abundant love towards their King and Master, of whom we also desire and wish to be companions, and to be made his disciples. When therefore the centurion saw and perceived the labour of the Jews, the corps being laid abroad, they burnt the same, as was their manner to do.

Thus good Polycarpus, with twelve others that came from Philadelphia, suffered martyrdom at Smyrna; which Polycarpus specially above the rest is had in memory, so that he in all places among the Gentiles is most famous. And this was the end of this worthy disciple of the apostles; whose history the brethren of the congregation of Smyrna have written in this their epistle, as is above recited.

Irenæus in his third book against heresies, the third chapter, and Eusebius in his fourth book, and fourteenth chapter, of his ecclesiastical history, reporteth this worthy saying of Polycarpus: "This Polycarpus (saith he) meeting at a certain time Marcion the heretic, who said to him, Dost thou not know me? made answer, I know that thou art the first-begotten of Satan. So little fear what evil might ensue thereof, had the disciples of the apostles, that they would not speak to them whom they knew to be the depravers of the verity, even as Paul saith, *The heretic, after the first and second admonition, shun and avoid: knowing that he which is such a one, is perverse or froward, and damneth himself.*" This most holy confessor and martyr of Christ, Polycarpus, suffered death in the fourth persecution after Nero, when Marcus Antoninus, and Lucius Aurelius Commodus reigned, in the year of our Lord one hundred threescore and seven, as *Ursperg.* affirmeth; in the year one hundred threescore and ten, as Eusebius witnesseth in his Chronicles, the seventh before the calends of February, *anno 167.*

Of Germanicus mention is made above in the story of Polycarpus,

Polycarpus, of whom writeth Eusebius, *lib. 3. cap. 15.* noting him to be a young man, and most constantly to persevere in the profession of Christ's doctrine; whom when the proconsul went to persuade to remember his age, and to favour himself, being in the flower of his age, he would not be allured, but constantly and boldly, and of his own accord, incited and provoked the wild beasts to come upon him, and to devour him; to be delivered more speedily out of this wretched life. *Hæc Euseb. Anno 170.*

Thus have you heard, out of the epistle of the brethren of Smyrna, the whole order and life of Polycarpus; whereby it may appear, that he was a very aged man, who had served Christ fourscore and six years since the first knowledge of him, and served also in the ministry about the space of threescore and ten years. This Polycarpus was the scholar and hearer of John the Evangelist, and was placed by the said John in Smyrna. Of him also Ignatius maketh mention in his epistle which he wrote in his journey to Rome, going toward his martyrdom, and commendeth to him the government of his church at Antioch; whereby it appeareth, that Polycarpus was then in the ministry. Likewise Irenæus writeth, *lib. 3. cap. 1.* of the said Polycarpus after this manner: "He always taught (said he) those things which he learned of the apostles, (leaving them to the church), and are only true." Whereunto also all the churches that be in Asia, and all they which succeeded after Polycarpus to this day bear witness. And the same Irenæus witnesseth also, that the said Polycarpus wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which whether it be the same that is now extant, and read in the name of Polycarpus, it is doubted of some: notwithstanding in the said epistle divers things are found very wholesome and apostolic; as where he teacheth of Christ, of judgment, and of the resurrection. Also he writeth of faith very worthily, thus declaring, that by grace we are saved, and not by works, but in the will of God by Jesus Christ.

In Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 20.* we read in like manner a part of an epistle written by Irenæus to Florinus, wherein is declared, how that the said Irenæus being yet young, was with Polycarpus in Asia, at what time he saw and well remembered  
what



what Polycarpus did, and the place where he sat teaching, his whole order of life, and proportion of his body, with the sermons and words which he said to the people. And furthermore, he perfectly remembered, how that the said Polycarpus oftentimes reported unto him those things which he learned and heard them speak of the Lord his doings, power, and doctrine, who heard the word of life with their own ears; all which were most consonant and agreeable to the holy scripture. This, with much more, hath Irenæus concerning Polycarpus.

Hierome also, writing of the same Polycarpus, hath, how he was in great estimation throughout all Asia, for that he was scholar to the apostles, and to them which did see, and were conversant with Christ himself; whereby it is to be conjectured, his authority to be much, not only with them of his own church, but with all other churches about him.

Over and besides, it is witnessed by the said Irenæus, that Polycarpus came to Rome in the time of Anicetus bishop of Rome, about the year of our Lord one hundred fifty and seven, in the reign of Antoninus Pius, whose cause of his coming thither appeareth to be about the controversy of Easter-day, wherein the Asians and the Romans something disagreed among themselves. And therefore the said Polycarpus, in the behalf of the brethren and church of Asia, took his long journey thither, to come and confer with Anicetus. Whereof writeth also Nicephorus, *lib. 4. cap. 39.* declaring, that Polycarpus and Anicetus something varied in opinions and judgment about that matter; and that notwithstanding, yet both friendly communicated either with the other, insomuch that Anicetus in his church gave place to Polycarpus to minister the communion and sacrament of the Lord's supper for honour sake. Which may be a notable testimony now to us, that the doctrine concerning the free use and liberty of ceremonies, was at that time retained in the church without any offence of stomach, or breach of Christian peace in the church.

This Polycarpus (as is above mentioned) suffered his martyrdom even in his own church at Smyrna, where he had laboured so many years in planting of the gospel of Christ,



Christ, which was about the year of our Lord an hundred threescore and ten, as Eusebius reckoneth in his Chronicles, and in the seventh year of Antoninus Verus his reign; whereby it appeareth, that Socrates, in *Historia tripartita*, was much deceived, saying, that Polycarpus suffered in the time of Gordianus.

In this fourth persecution, besides Polycarpus, and others mentioned before, we read also in Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 17.* of divers others, who at the same time likewise did suffer at Smyrna.

Over and besides, in the same persecution suffered moreover Metrodorus a minister, who was given to the fire, and so consumed. Another was worthy Pionius, which after much boldness of speech, with his apologies exhibited, and his sermons made to the people in the defence of Christian faith, and after much relieving and comforting of such as were in prisons, and otherwise discomfited, at last was put to cruel torments and afflictions, then given likewise to the fire, and so finished his blessed martyrdom.

After these also suffered Carpus, Papilus, and Agathonica, a woman, who, after their most constant and worthy confessions, were put to death at Pergamopolis in Asia, witnessing Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 7.*

And as these suffered in Asia, so in Rome suffered Felicitas, with her seven children, who under this M. Antoninus Verus sustained also the cruelty of this persecution. The names of whose children Bergomensis, and other histories, do thus recite: Januarius, Felix, Philip, Silvanus, Alexander, Vitalis, Martialis. Of whom her first and eldest son Januarius, after he was whipped and scourged with rods, was prest to death with leaden weights. Felix and Philip had their brains beaten out with mauls. Silvanus was cast down headlong, and had his neck broken. Furthermore, Alexander, Vitalis, and Martialis, were beheaded. Last of all, Felicitas the mother (otherwise than the accustomed manner was for such as had born children) was slain with the sword. *Ex Supplementum.*

In the rage of this fourth persecution, under the reign of Antoninus Pius, suffered also good Justinus, a man in learning and philosophy excellent, and a great defender of  
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Christian religion, who first exhibited unto the emperor, and to the senate, a book or apology in the defence of the Christians, and afterward himself also died a martyr. Of whom, in the history of Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 16*, it is thus recorded: "That about what time, or a little before that Polycarpus, with divers other saints, suffered martyrdom in Pergamopolis, a city of Asia, this Justinus (as is aforesaid) presented a book in defence of our doctrine to the emperor, to wit, unto Antoninus, and to the senate. After which he was also crowned with like martyrdom unto those whom he in his book had defended, through the malicious means and crafty circumvention of Crescens."

This Crescens was a philosopher, conforming his life and manners to the Cynical sect, whom, because this Justinus had reproved in open audience, and had borne away the victory of the truth which he defended; he therefore, as much as in him lay, did work and procure unto him this crown of martyrdom. And this did also Justin himself, a philosopher, no less famous by his profession, foresee and declare in his foresaid apology, telling almost all those things before hand which should happen unto him, by these words, saying, And I look after this good turn, that I be slain going by the way, either of some of those whom I have named, and to have my brains beaten out with a bat, or else of Crescens, whom I cannot call a philosopher, but rather a vain boaster. For it is not convenient to call him a philosopher, which openly professeth things to him unknown, and whereof he hath no skill, saying and reporting of us, that the Christians be ungodly and irreligious; and all to please and flatter them which are seduced by error.

For whether he objecteth against us the doctrine of the Christians which he hath not read, yet is he very malicious, and worse than the unlearned idiots, who, for the most part, use not to dispute, or judge of things they know not, and to bear witness of the same. Or put the case that he had read it, yet understandeth he not the majesty of the matters therein contained; or if peradventure he understandeth them, and doth it for this purpose, that he would not be counted as one of them, then is he so much the more

wicked and malicious, and the bond-slave of vile and beastly both fame and fear. For this I testify of him, giving you truly to understand that for a truth, which I declare unto you, how that I have opposed him, and have put unto him many questions, whereby I know and perceive, that he understandeth nothing. But if so be that this our disputation with him hath not come unto your ears, I am ready to communicate unto you again those questions which I demanded of him; which things shall not be unfit for your princely honour to hear. But if ye know and understand both what things I have examined him of, as also what answer he hath made, it shall be apparent unto you, that he is altogether ignorant of our doctrine and learning; or else if he knoweth the same, he dare not utter it for fear of his auditors; which thing, as I said before, is a proof that he is no philosopher, but a slave to vain-glory, which maketh none account of that, which his own master Socrates had in so great estimation. And thus much of Justin, out of Justin himself.

Now, to verify that which Justin here of himself doth prophesy, that Crescens would and did procure his death; Tacianus (a man brought up of a child in the institutions of the Gentiles, and obtained in the same not a little fame, and which also left behind him many good monuments and commentaries) writeth in his book against the Gentiles in this sort: And Justin, (saith he), that most excellent learned man, full well spake and uttered his mind, that the afore-recited men were like unto thieves or liars by the high-way side. And in the said book speaking afterward of certain philosophers, the said Tacianus inferreth thus: Crescens therefore, (saith he), when he came first into that great city, passed all others in the vicious love of children, and was very much given to covetousness; and where he taught that men ought not to regard death, he himself doth fear death, and he did all his endeavour to oppress Justin with death, as with the greatest evil that was; and all because that Justin, speaking truth, reproveth the philosophers to be men only for the belly, and deceivers; and this was the cause of Justin's martyrdom. Hierome, in his ecclesiastical catalogue, thus writeth: Justin, when in the city.



city of Rome he had his disputations, and had reprov'd Crescens the Cynic, for a great blasphemers of the Christians, for a belligod, and a man fearing death, and also a follower of lust and lechery; at last, by his endeavour and conspiracy, was accused to be a Christian, and for Christ shed his blood in the year of our Lord one hundred fifty and four, under Marcus Antoninus, as the chronicles do witness, Abbas Urspergensis, and Eusebius in his chronicle, in the thirteenth year of the emperor Antoninus.

Among these above recited, is also to be numbered Prædix, a blessed virgin, the daughter of a citizen of Rome, who, in the time of Anicetus their bishop, was so brought up in the doctrine of Christ, and so affected to his religion, that she, with her sister Potentiana, bestowed all her patrimony upon the relieving of poor Christians, giving all her time to fasting and prayer, and to the burying of the bodies of the martyrs. And after she had made free all her family, with her servants, after the death of her sister, she also departed, and was buried in peace.

Under the same Antoninus also suffered Ptolomeus and Lucius for the confession of Christ, in a city of Egypt, called Alexandria; whose history, because it is described in the apology of Justinus Martyr, I thought therefore so to set forth the same, as it is alledged in Eusebius, declaring the manner and occasion thereof, *lib. 4. cap. 17.* in words and effect as followeth.

“ There was (saith he) a certain woman married unto a husband, who was given much to lasciviousness, whereunto she herself in times past was also addicted. But she afterward being instructed in the Christian religion, became chaste herself, and also persuaded her husband to live chastly; oftentimes telling him, that it was written in the precepts of the Christians, that they should be punished eternally which lived not chastly and justly in this life. But he still continuing in his filthiness, thereby caused his wife to estrange herself from his company. For why, the woman thought it not convenient to continue in her husband's company, which, contemning the law of nature, sought otherwise to satisfy his filthy appetite. Therefore she was purposed to be divorced from him. But her neighbours and

kinsfolk provoked her, by promising his amendment, to keep company again with him, and so she did. But he after, this took his journey into Alexandria, and when it was shewed her, that there he lived more licentiously than at any time before, for that she would not be counted partaker of his incestuous life, by coupling herself any longer with him, she gave him a letter of divorce, and so departed from him. Then her husband, who ought rather to have rejoiced to have so honest and chaste a wife, which not only would not commit any dishonest thing herself, but also could not abide any lewd or misordered behaviour in her husband, and that by this her separation she went about to reclaim him from his incest and wickedness to better amendment of life; he, in recompence to his wife again, accused her to be a Christian, which at that time was no less than death. Whereupon she, being in great peril and danger, delivered up unto the emperor (as Justinus in his apology writing to the emperor himself declareth) a supplication, desiring and craving of his majesty, first, to grant her so much licence as to set her family in order; and that done, afterward to come again and make answer to all that might or should be laid against her: whereunto the emperor condescended. Then her husband seeing that he could have no advantage against her, devised with himself, how he might bring Ptolomeus (which was her instructor in the faith of Christ) in trouble and accusation; using the means of a certain centurion, who was his very friend, whom he persuaded to examine Ptolomeus, whether he were a Christian or not? Ptolemeus (as one that loved the truth, and not thinking good to hide his profession) confessed no less then to the examiner, openly declaring that he had (as truth was) taught and professed the verity of Christian doctrine. For whoso denieth himself to be that he is, either condemneth in denying the thing that he is, or maketh himself unworthy of that, the confession whereof he flieth, which thing is never found in a true and sincere Christian. Thus then he being brought before Urbicious the judge, and by him condemned to suffer; one Lucius, being also a Christian, standing by, and seeing the wrong judgment, and hasty sentence of the judge, said to Urbicius, What reason, I pray you,

you, or equity is this, that this man, who neither is adulterer, nor fornicator, nor homicide, nor felon, neither hath committed any such crime, wherewith he may be charged, is thus condemned only for his name and confession of a Christian? This condemnation, and this manner of judgments, (O Urbicius), are neither seemly for the virtuous emperor, nor to the philosopher his son, nor yet for the estate of his senate of Rome.

Which words being heard, Urbicius making no further examination of the matter, said unto Lucius, Methinketh thou art also a Christian. And when Lucius had given him to understand that he was also a Christian, the judge without further delay, commanded him to be had away to the place of execution. To whom he answered, I thank you with all my heart, that you release me from most wicked governors, and send me unto my good and most loving Father, being also the King of all gods. And in like manner the third man also, coming unto him, and using the like liberty of speech, had also the like sentence of death and condemnation, and was crowned also with the same crown of martyrdom. And thus much out of the apology of Justinus. By the which story it may appear not to be true, that Gratianus attributeth unto Higinus, bishop of Rome, the deciding of causes matrimonial, seeing that in Justinus's time, (who was in the same age of Higinus), the divorcement of this woman in this history above touched, was not decided by any ecclesiastical law, or brought before any bishop, but was brought before an Heathen prince, and determined by the law civil.

Henricus de Erfordia recordeth out of the martyrology of Isuardus, of one Concordus, a minister of the city of Spolet, who, in the reign of this Antoninus Verus, because he would not sacrifice unto Jupiter, but did spit in the face of the idol, after divers and sundry punishments sustained, at last with the sword was beheaded. Vincentius, in his tenth book, chap. 108. reciteth a long story of his acts and life, whereof some part perhaps may seem tolerable. But this verily appeareth to be false and fabulous, concerning the water flowing besides his sepulchre in the forenamed city of Spolet; unto the which water was given, (saith Vincentius),



centius), by the virtue of him for whose name he suffered, to restore sight to the blind, to heal the sick, and to cast out devils, &c. Which kind of virtue, to open the eyes of the blind, and to expel devils, neither doth God give to any creature of water, neither is it like that Concordus the blessed martyr did, or would require any such thing at the hands of God.

Ifuardus, and Bede, Vincentius, and Henricus de Erfordia, with other authors more, make relation of divers other martyrs, that, by fundry kinds of torments, were put to death under the aforesaid Antoninus Verus; the names of whom be Symmetrius, Florellus, Pontianus, Alexander, Cajus, Epipodus, Victor, Corona, Marcellus, Valerianus. The cause of whose martyrdom was the reprehending of idolatry, and because at the emperor's commandment they would not sacrifice to idols. Many sorts of punishments and miracles are told of them; but at length the end of them all is this, that they were beheaded. Whereby it may be the more suspected, the histories of these writers not to be certain or true, as well touching these as also other martyrs, as may appear in Vincentius, in Petrus de Natalibus, and other authors of like sort. In which authors they which list to read more of their miracles there may find them.

A little before, mention was made of Symphorissa, otherwise named Symphorosa, wife of Getulus, with her seven sons. This Getulus or Getulius was a minister or teacher (as witnesseth *Martyrol. Adonis*) in the city of Tiber; which Getulus, with Cerealis, Amantius, and Primitivus, by the commandment of Hadrian, were condemned to the fire, wherein they were martyred and put to death. The names moreover of the seven sons of this Symphorosa, I find to be Crescens, Julianus, Nemefius, Primitivus, Justinus, Statteus, and Eugenius, whom the chronicle of Ado declareth to be put to death at the commandment of Hadrian, being fastened to seven stakes, and so racked up with a pulley, and at last were thrust through, Crescens in the neck, Julianus in the breast, Nemefius in the heart, Primitivus about the navel, Justinus cut in every joint of his body, Statteus run through with spears, Eugenius cut asunder from the breast

to the lower parts, and then cast into a deep pit, having the name, by the idolatrous priests, entitled, *Ad septem Biothanatos*. After the martyrdom of whom also Symphorosa the mother did likewise suffer, as is before declared.

Under the said Antoninus Verus, and in the same persecution, which raged not in Rome and Asia only, but in other countries also, suffered the glorious and most constant martyrs of Lions and Vienna, two cities in France, giving to Christ a glorious testimony, and to all Christian men a spectacle or example of singular constancy and fortitude in Christ our Saviour. The history of whom, because it is written and set forth by their own churches, where they did suffer, mentioned in Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 2*. I thought here to express the same, in the form and effect of their own words, as there is to be seen. The title of which their epistle written to the brethren of Asia and Phrygia thus beginneth.

The servants of Christ inhabiting the cities of Vienna and Lions, to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, having the same faith and hope of redemption with us: peace, grace, and glory from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE greatness of this our tribulation, the furious rage of the Gentiles against us, and the torments which the blessed martyrs suffered, neither can we in words, nor yet in writing, exactly, as they deserve, set forth. For the adversary with all his force, gave his endeavour to the working of such preparatives, as he himself listed, against his tyrannous coming, and in every place practised he, and instructed his ministers, how, in most spiteful manner, to set them against the servants of God: so that not only in our houses, shops, and markets, we were restrained, but also were universally commanded, that none (so hardy) should be seen in any place. But God hath always mercy in store, and took out of their hands such as were weak amongst them, and other some did he set up as firm and immoveable pillars, which by sufferance were able to abide all violent force,

force, and valiantly to withstand the enemy, enduring all their opprobrious punishment they could devise: to conclude, they fought this battle for that intent to come unto Christ, esteeming their great troubles but as light; thereby shewing, that all that may be suffered in this present life, is not able to countervail the great glory which shall be shewed upon us after this life. And, first, they patiently suffered whatsoever the multitude of frantic people running upon head did unto them, as railings, scourgings, drawings and halings, flinging of stones, imprisonings, and what other thing soever the rage of the multitude is wont to use and practise against their professed enemies. Then afterward they being led into the market-place, and there judged of the captain and rest of the potentates of the city, after their confession made openly before the multitude, were commanded again to prison, until the return of their chief governor. After this they being brought before him, and he using all extremity that possibly he might against them; one Vetius Epagathus, one of the brethren, replenished with fervent zeal, both towards God and his brethren, whose conversation, although he were a young man, was counted as perfect as was the life of Zachary the priest: for he walked diligently in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord, and in all obedience towards his brethren blameless. He having within him the fervent zeal of love, and Spirit of God, could not suffer that wicked judgment which was given upon the Christians; but being vehemently displeased, desired that the judge would hear the excuse which he was minded to make in the behalf of the Christians, in whom (saith he) is no impiety found. But the people cried again to those that were assistants with the chief justice, that it might not be so, (for indeed he was a nobleman born); neither did the justice grant him his lawful request, but only asked him, whether he himself was a Christian or not? And he immediately, with a loud and bold voice, answered and said, I am a Christian. And thus was he received into the fellowship of the martyrs, and called the advocate of the Christians. And he having the Spirit of God more plentifully in time, than had Zachary, the abundance thereof he declared, in that he gave  
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his life in the defence of his brethren, being a true disciple of Christ, following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth.

By this man's example, the rest of the martyrs were the more animated to martyrdom, and made more joyous with all courage of mind to accomplish the same. Some other there were unready, and not so well prepared, and as yet weak, not well able to bear the vehemency of so great a conflict; of whom ten there were in number that fainted, ministering to us much heaviness and lamentation. Who by their example caused the rest, which were not yet apprehended, to be less willing thereunto. Then were we all for the variableness of confession not a little astonished: not that we feared the punishment intended against us, but rather as having respect to the end, and fearing lest any should fall. Every day there were apprehended such as were worthy to fulfil the number of them which were fallen; insomuch that of two churches, such as were chiefest, and which were the principal governors of our churches, were apprehended. With these also certain of the Ethnics, being our men-servants, were apprehended; (for so the governor commanded, that all of us in general without any respect should be taken); which servants being overcome by Satan, and fearing the torments which they saw the saints to suffer, being also compelled thereunto by the means of the soldiers, feigned against us that we kept the feastings of Thiestes, and incest of Oedipus, and many such other crimes, which are neither to be remembered, nor named of us, nor yet to be thought that ever any man would commit the like.

These things being now bruited abroad, every man began to shew cruelty against us, insomuch that those which before for familiarity sake were more gentle towards us, now vehemently disdained us, and waxed mad against us. And thus was now fulfilled that which was spoken by Christ, saying, *The time will come, that whosoever killeth you, shall think that he doth God great good service.* Then suffered the martyrs of God such bitter persecution as is passing to be told; Satan still shooting at this mark, to make them to utter some blasphemy by all means possible. Marvelous therefore was the rage both of the people and prince,

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especially against one Sanctus, which was deacon of the congregation of Vienna; and against Maturus, being but a little before baptized, but yet a worthy foldier of Christ; and also against Attalus, being born in Pergama, which was the foundation and pillar of that congregation; and also against Blandina; by whom Christ sheweth those things, which the world esteemed vile and abject, to be glorious in God's sight, for the very love which in heart and deed they bare unto him, not in outward face only. For when all we were afraid, and especially her mistress in the flesh, who also was herself one of the number of the aforesaid martyrs, lest haply for the weakness of body she would not stand strongly to her confession, the foresaid Blandina was so replenished with strength and boldness, that they which had the tormenting of her by course, from morning to night, for very weariness gave over, and fell down, and were themselves overcome, confessing that they could do no more against her, and marvelled that yet she lived, having her body so torn and rent; and testified that any one of those torments alone, without any more, had been enough to have pluckt the life from her body. But that blessed woman, fighting this worthy battle, became stronger and stronger; and as often as she spake these words, (I am a Christian, neither have we committed any evil), it was to her a marvelous comfort and boldening to abide the torments.

Sanctus also, another of the martyrs, who in the midst of his torments, enduring more pains than the nature of a man might away with, also at what time the wicked supposed to have heard him utter some blasphemous words, for the greatness and intolerableness of his torments and pains that he was in, abode notwithstanding in such constancy of mind, that neither told he them his name, nor what country-man he was, nor in what city brought up, neither whether he was a freeman or a servant; but unto every question that was asked him, he answered in the Latin tongue, I am a Christian; and this was all that he confessed both of his name, city, kindred, and all other things in the place of execution; neither yet could the Gentiles get any more of him: whereupon both the governor and tormentors were the more vehemently bent against him.

him. And when they had nothing to vex him withal, they clapped plates of brasse red hot to the most tenderest parts of his body, wherewith his body indeed being scorched, yet he never shrunk for the matter, but was bold and constant in his confession, being strengthened and moistened with the fountain of lively water flowing out of Christ's side. Truly his body was a sufficient witness what torments he suffered; for it was all drawn together, and most pitifully wounded and scorched, so that it had therewith lost the proper shape of a man; in whose suffering Christ obtained unspeakable glory, for that he overcame his adversaries, and to the instruction of others, declared that nothing else is terrible, or ought to be feared, where the love of God is, and nothing grievous wherein the glory of Christ is manifested.

And when those wicked men began after a certain time again to torment the martyr, and hoped well to bring it to pass, that either they should overcome him in causing him to recant, by reiterating his torments, now when his body was so sore and swollen, that he might not suffer a man to touch him with his hand, or else, that if he died under their hands, yet that thereby they should strike such fear into the hearts of the rest, as to cause them to deny Christ; they were not only disappointed herein, but also, contrary to the expectation of men, his body was, in the latter punishment and torments, suppled and restored, and took the first shape and use of the members of the same, so that the same his second torment was by the grace of Christ (instead of punishment) a safe medicine.

Also Satan now thinking to have settled himself in the heart of one Biblides, being one of them which had denied Christ, and thinking to have caused her, being a weak and feeble woman in faith, to have damned her soul, in blaspheming the name of God, brought her to the place of execution, enforcing to wrest some wicked thing out of the mouth of the Christians. But she, in the middle of her torments, returning to herself, and waked as it were out of her dead sleep by that temporal pain, called to her remembrance the pains of hell-fire, and against all mens expectations reviled the tormentors, saying, How should



we Christians eat young infants, (as ye reported of us), for whom it is not lawful to eat the blood of any beast? Upon that, so soon as she had confessed herself to be a Christian, she was martyred with the rest. Thus when Christ had ended those tyrannical torments, by the patience and sufferance of our saints, the devil yet invented other engines and instruments. For when the Christians were cast into prison, they were shut up in dark and ugly dungeons, and were drawn by the feet in a rack or engine made for that purpose, even unto the fifth hole. And many other such punishments suffered they, which the furious ministers, stirred up with devilish fury, are wont to put men unto; so that very many of them were strangled and killed in prisons, whom the Lord in this manner would have to enjoy everlasting life, and set forth his glory. And surely these good men were so pitifully tormented, that if they had had all the helps and medicines in the world, it was thought impossible for them to live, and to be restored. And thus they remaining in prison, destitute of all human help, were so strengthened of the Lord, and both in body and mind confirmed, that they comforted and stirred up the minds of the rest: the younger sort of them, which were later apprehended, and put in prison, whose bodies had not yet felt the lash of the whip, were not able to endure the sharpness of their imprisonment, but died of the same.

The blessed Photinus, who was deacon to the bishop of Lions, about fourscore and nine years old, and a very feeble or weak man, and could scarcely draw breath for the imbecillity of his body; yet was he of a lively courage and spirit, and for the great desire he had of martyrdom, when he was brought unto the judgment-seat, although his body was feeble and weak, both because of his old age, and also through sickness; yet was his soul or life preserved to this purpose, that by the same Christ might triumph and be glorified. He being by the soldiers brought to the place of judgment, many citizens, and men of great ability following him, and the whole multitude crying upon him diversly, as though he had been Christ himself, gave a good testimony. For being demanded of the chief ruler, what was the Christian man's God? he answered, If thou be worthy

worthy to know, thou shalt know. He being with these words somewhat near touched, caused him to be very sore beaten. For those that stood next him, did him all the spite and displeasure that they could, both with hand and foot, having no regard at all to his old age or white hairs. And they which were further off, whatsoever came next to hand, they threw at him, and every man thought that he did very wickedly refrain, that with-held his hand from doing the like; for by this means they thought that they did revenge the quarrel of their gods. Photinus now, even as it were grasping after life, was thrown into prison, and within two days after died.

And here is the mighty providence of God, and the unspeakable mercy of Jesus Christ declared, which providence, being assured amongst a fraternity, is never destitute of the aid of Jesus Christ. For those which in their first persecution denied Christ, they also were put in prison, and made partakers of the others affliction. Neither yet did it any whit at all at that time help them that had denied Christ, but they which confessed him were imprisoned as Christians, neither was there any other crime objected against them; but the other sort, taken like homicides and wicked doers, were laid hand on, and had double more punishment than the others had. These men were refreshed with the joy of martyrdom, the hope of God's promises, the love towards Christ, and the Spirit of God; the others, their consciences accused them, and that very sore, insomuch that by their gate, their countenances bewrayed unto the rest their guilty consciences. For the Christians went forth having cheerful countenances, very much adorned with glory and grace, insomuch that the very bonds wherewith they were tied, set them out as men in seemly apparel, and like as brides when they be decked in gorgeous and gay garments, and therewithal favoured as of the redolent smell of Christ, so that it might be supposed them to be anointed with some sweet balm: whereas the others were doubtful and sad, abject, ill-favoured, filled with all shame, and furthermore reviled of the Gentiles themselves, as wretches degenerate, having the crime of homicide, and destitute of the most precious, glorious, and lively

ly calling of the Christian name. And truly by these sights the rest were confirmed, and, being apprehended, confessed Christ without any staggering, not having so much as the thought of any such devilish mind of denial." And in the same epistle of the foresaid brethren of France, writing to the brethren of Asia, it followeth in this manner: "After these things done, the martyrdom of these holy saints was divided diversly into divers kinds and forms, as the offering to God the Father a garland decked with divers and sundry kinds of colours and flowers. For it so behoved the worthy champions of God, after they had suffered divers kinds of torments, and so won a triumphant victory, to obtain great reward of immortality.

Then Maturus, Blandina, and Attalus were brought together to the common scaffold, there in the face of the people to be cast and devoured of the beasts. And Maturus, with Sanctus, being brought the second time to the scaffold, suffered again all kind of torments, as though hitherto they had suffered nothing at all: yea rather the adversary being oftentimes put to the worst, they, as striving for the crown, suffered again more scourgings, the tearing of wild beasts, and what thing else soever the frantic people on every side cried for and willed. And above all the rest they brought an iron chair, in the which their bodies being set, were so fried and scorched, as on a gridiron fried on the coals, and filled with the favour of the frying all the people that stood by. And yet for all that the tormentors ceased not, but waxed more fierce and mad against them, labouring to overcome the patience of the saints. Notwithstanding all this, they could not get out of Sanctus's mouth any other thing but the confession which at the beginning he declared. And thus these holy men, after they had long continued alive in this their most horrible conflict, at the length were slain, being made all that whole day a spectacle unto the world, in place and in stead of the games and fights which were wont to be exhibited to the people. And thus much concerning Maturus and Sanctus.

Now concerning Blandina, she being fastened upon a stake was cast to the ravening beasts to be devoured; which thing was not done without the determinate will of God:



to this end, that while she seemed as it were to hang upon a cross, by the ferventness of her prayer she might comfort the rest of the saints, as beholding their Christ with their bodily eyes, which in that agony suffered for them all; and that all which believe in him, and suffer for the glory of Christ, might be assured to live with him for ever. And when they saw that no beast would come near her thus hanging, they took her down from the tree, and cast her again into prison till another time, that she, having the victory of many battles, might triumph over that ugly serpent the devil, and that she, being a weak and silly woman, and not regarded, armed with Christ the invincible conqueror, might encourage her brethren, and by the enduring of this battle might win a crown of incorruptible glory.

Now to Attalus; who, being also required and called for of the people to punishment already prepared (for his conscience sake) cometh forth to the fight. For he being worthily exercised in the Christian profession, was always a witness and a maintainer of our doctrine. Therefore when the press of people was about the scaffold, and the table carried before him, wherein was written in the Roman tongue, This is Attalus the Christian; then the people were in a marvellous rage against him. But the governor, understanding that he was a Roman, commanded him again to prison, with the rest of his prison-fellows; whereof he wrote to the emperor, and waited for answer what his pleasure herein was. The prisoners were not idle in the mean season, nor unprofitable to their brethren, but by their patience the unspeakable mercy of Christ shined out. For those which were dead before were now revived by them that lived, and they which were martyrs profited them which were none, and the church did much rejoice, as receiving them again alive, whom she had lost before as dead; for many of them, which before had denied, now by their denial were restored and stirred up, and learned to be confessors. And now being revived and strengthened, and tasting the sweetness of him which desireth not the death of a sinner, but is merciful to the penitent, came of their own accord to the judgment-seat again, that they might be examined of the judge. And for that the emperor

ror had written back again to him, that all the confessors should be punished, and the other let go, and that the sessions or sises were now begun, which, for the multitude that had repair thither out of every quarter, was marvellous great; he caused all the holy martyrs to be brought thither, that the multitude might behold them, and once again examined them; and as many of them as he thought had the Roman freedom, he beheaded, the residue he gave to the beasts to be devoured. And truly Christ was much glorified by those which a little before had denied him, which again, contrary to the expectation of the infidels, confessed him even unto the death. For they were examined apart from the rest, because of their delivery; which being found confessors, were joined to the company of the martyrs, and had with them their part. But there were then some abroad which had no faith at all, neither yet so much as the feeling of the wedding-garment, nor any cogitation at all of the fear of God, but blasphemed his ways by the lewd conversation of their life, even such as were the children of damnation. All the residue joined themselves to the congregation: which when they were examined, one Alexander, a Phrygian born, and a physician, which had dwelt long in France, and known almost of all, for the love he had to God, and boldness of speaking, (neither was he void of the apostolical love); one Alexander, I say, standing somewhat near to the bar, by signs and becks persuaded such as were examined, to confess Christ; so that by his countenance, sometime rejoicing, some other while sorrowing, he was descried of the standers by. The people not taking in good part to see those which now recanted by and by again to stick to their first confession, they cried out against Alexander as one that was the cause of all this matter. And when he was enforced by the judge, and demanded what religion he was of? he answered, I am a Christian. He had no sooner spoken the word, but he was judged to the beasts of them to be devoured.

The next day following, Attalus, of whom I made mention a little before, and Alexander, were brought forth together; for the governor granting Attalus unto the people, he was baited again of the beasts. When these men were brought

brought to the scaffold, and had taken a taste of all the instruments that there were prepared for their execution, and had suffered the greatest agony they could put them to, they were also at the length slain; of whom Alexander never gave so much as a sigh, nor held his peace; but from the bottom of his heart praised and prayed to the Lord. But Attalus, when he was set in the iron chair, and began to fry, and the frying favour of his burning body began to smell, he spake to the multitude in the Roman language: Behold, (saith he), this which you do is to eat man's flesh; for we neither eat men, nor yet commit any other wickedness. And being demanded, what was the name of their God? Our God (saith he) hath no such name as men have. Then said they, Now let us see whether your God can help you, and take you out of our hands or not:

After this, being the last day of the spectacle, Blandina again, and one Ponticus, a child of fifteen years old, was brought forth, and this was every day, to the intent that they, seeing the punishment of their fellows, might be compelled thereby to swear by their idols. But because they constantly abode in their purpose, and desired their idols, the whole multitude was in a rage with them, neither sparing the age of the child, nor favouring the sex of the woman, but put them to all the punishment and pain they could devise, and oftentimes enforced them to swear, and yet were not able to compel them thereunto: for Ponticus being so animated of his sister, as the Ethnics standing by did see, after that he had suffered all torments and pains, gave up the ghost. This blessed Blandina therefore being the last that suffered, after she had, like a worthy mother, given exhortations unto her children, and had sent them before as conquerors to their heavenly King, and had called to her remembrance all their battles and conflicts, so much rejoiced of her children's death, and so hastened her own, as though she had been bidden to a bridal, and not in case to be thrown to the wild beasts. After this her pitiful whipping, her delivery to the beasts, and her torments upon the gridiron, at the length she was put in a net, and thrown to the wild bull, and when she had been sufficiently gored and wounded with the horns of the same beast,

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and felt nothing of all that chanced to her, for the great hope and consolation she had in Christ and heavenly things, was thus slain, insomuch that the very Heathen men themselves confessed, that there was never woman put to death of them that suffered so much as this woman did. Neither yet was their furious cruelty thus assuaged against the Christians. For the cruel barbarous people, like wild beasts when they be moved, knew not when the time was to make an end, but invented new and sundry torments every day against our bodies. Neither yet did it content them when they had put the Christians to death, for that they wanted the sense of men: for which cause both the magistrate and people were vexed at the very hearts, that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, *He that is wicked, let him be wicked still, and he that is just, let him be more just.* For those which in their prisons they strangled, they threw after to the dogs, setting keepers both day and night to watch them, that they should not be buried, and bringing forth the remnant of their bones and bodies, some half burned, some left of the wild beasts, and some all to be mangled, also bringing forth heads of others which were cut off, and in like manner committed by them to the charge of the keepers, to see them remain unburied.

The Gentiles grinded and gnashed at the Christians with their teeth, seeking which way they might amplify their punishment: some other flouted and mocked them, extolling their idols, attributing unto them the cause of this cruelty and vengeance shewed to us. Such as were of the meeker sort, and seemed to be moved with some pity, did hit us in the teeth, saying, Where is your God that you so much boast of? and what helpeth this your religion for which you give your lives? These were the sundry passions and effects of the Gentiles; but the Christians in the mean while were in great heaviness, that they might not bury the bodies and relicks of the holy martyrs. Neither could the dark night serve them to that purpose, nor any intreaty, nor waging them with money, which were appointed for watchmen; but they so narrowly looked unto the matter, as though they should have gotten great benefit and profit thereby.

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Thus were the bodies of the martyrs made a wondering stock, and lay six days in the open streets; at the length they burned them, and threw their ashes into the river of Rhodes, so that there might appear no remnant of them upon the earth. And this did they as though they had been able to have pulled God out of his seat, and to have let the regeneration of the saints, and taken from them the hope of the resurrection, whereof they being persuaded, (said they), bring in this new and strange religion, and set thus light by death and punishment." *Atque hæc ex epistola Viennensium, &c.*

Among others that suffered under Antoninus, mention was made also of Justinus, who (as it is said before) exhibited to two apologies, concerning the defence of Christian doctrine, the one to the senate of Rome, and the other to Antoninus Pius the emperor; concerning whose suffering, and the causes thereof, is partly before declared. This Justin was born in Neapoli, in the country of Palestine, whose father was Priscus Bachius, as he himself doth testify, by whom in his youth he was set to school to learn, where, in process of time, he became a famous and worthy philosopher, of whose excellency many learned and notable men do record. For, first, he being altogether inflamed and ravished with desire of knowledge, would in nowise be satisfied in his mind, before he had gotten instructors singularly seen in all kind of philosophy; whereupon he writeth of himself in the beginning of his dialogue *Cum Triphone* thus; declaring, that, in the beginning, he being desirous of that sect and society, applied himself to be the scholar of a certain Stoick, and remaining with him a time, when he nothing profited in divine knowledge, (whereof the Stoick had no skill, and affirmed the knowledge thereof not to be necessary), he forsook him, and went to another of the sect of the Peripatetics, a sharp witted man, as he thought; with whom, after he had been a while, he demanded of him a stipend for his teaching, for the better confirmation of their familiarity. Whereupon Justin, accounting him as no philosopher, left him, and departed. And yet not satisfied in mind, but desirous to hear of further learning and philosophy, adjoined himself to one that professed

the Pythagorean sect, a man of great fame, and one who made no small account of himself. Whom, after he had followed a time, his master demanded of him, whether he had any sight in music, astronomy, and geometry, without the sight of which science, he said, he could not be apt to receive the knowledge of virtue and felicity, unless before he had used to apply his mind from sensible matters to the contemplation of things intelligible. And speaking much in the commendation of these sciences, how profitable and necessary they were; after that Justin had declared himself not to be seen therein, the philosopher gave him over, which grieved Justin not a little; and so much the more, because he thought his master to have some knowledge in those sciences. After this Justin considering with himself what time was requisite to the learning of these sciences, and thinking not to defer any longer, thought best to resort to the sect of the Platonists, for the great fame that ran of them: wherefore he chose unto him a singular learned man of that sect, which lately was come to those parts, and so remaining with him, seemed to profit not a little in contemplation of supernatural things, and invisible forms, in so much that he thought shortly to aspire to such sharpness of wit and wisdom, that out of hand he might achieve to the comprehension and contemplation of God, which is the end of Plato his philosophy. And in this manner he bestowed his youth: but afterward he growing to a riper age, how and by what means the said Justin came to the knowledge and profession of Christianity, it followeth likewise in his said first apology; where he affirmeth of himself, (as witnesseth Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 8.*), that when he did behold the Christians in their torments and sufferings to be so constant in their profession, was therewith marvellously moved; after this manner reasoning with himself, that it was impossible for that kind of people to be subject to any vice or carnality, which vices of their own nature are not able to sustain any sharp adversity, much less the bitterness of death. The sight whereof helped him not a little (being of his own nature inclined to the searching of true knowledge and virtue) to begin thereby to love and embrace Christian religion; for so he doth witness of himself in the end of the first apology,



apology, signifying there how it was his seeking and endeavour to attain to Christianity; understanding how the Christians, by malice of wicked persons, were compelled to suffer wrong and torments, and to be evil spoken of. By sight whereof, as he saith himself, he became a Christian, through this occasion. For being thus afflicted in his mind, as is afore said, it came in his head, for his more quietness, to go aside to some desert and solitary place, void of concourse of people, unto a village or grange near to the seaside; whither as he approached, thinking there to be all alone, there meeteth with him an old ancient father, of a comely visage, and gentle behaviour, who following him a little off, began to reason with him: where, after long disputation, when the old man had declared unto him, that there was no knowledge of truth amongst the philosophers, which neither knew God, neither were aided by the Holy Ghost; and further, had reasoned with him of the immortality of the soul, of the reward of the godly, and punishment of the wicked; then Justin, being confirmed with his reasons and arguments, yielded to him of his own accord; and demanded of him, by what means he might attain to that true knowledge of God, whereof he had spoken? who then counselled him to read and search the prophets, adjoining therewith prayer. But what master (quoth Justin) should I use for the instruction thereof? and who shall be able to help us if these philosophers (as you say) lack the truth, and are void of the same? To whom the old father answering, There have been (said he) many years before these philosophers other more ancient than all these, which being accounted for philosophers, were just and beloved of God, who spake by the Spirit of God, foreseeing and prophesying these things which we see now come to pass, and therefore they are called prophets. These only have known the truth, and revealed it to men, neither fearing nor passing for any; who were seduced with no opinions of man's invention, but only spake and taught those things which they themselves both heard and saw, being inspired with the Holy Spirit of God; whose writings and works yet to this day remain, out of which the reader may receive great profit and knowledge of things, as concerning  
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the first creation of the world, and end of the same, with all other things necessary to be known of every true philosopher which will give credit unto them. Neither in their teaching do they use any demonstration, as being more certain of themselves, than that they need any such demonstration to be made, forasmuch as the accomplishing and the end of things, both past and now present, constraineth us of necessity to believe the words and doctrine which they taught: which men not only therefore are to be believed, but also for their miracles and wonders done, are worthy of credit; for that they both preached of God, the Maker and Creator of all things, and also did prophesy before of Christ his Son to be sent of him; the which, the false prophets being seduced with false and wicked spirits, neither have done, nor do, but only take upon them to work certain prodigious wonders for men to gaze at, setting out thereby to the world false and unclean spirits. But then, afore all things, make thy prayer, that the gate of light may be opened unto thee, for otherwise these things cannot be attained unto of every man, but only of such to whom God and his Christ giveth understanding.

These things, with much more, (which now leisure serveth not to prosecute), after the foresaid old father had declared unto him, he departed, exhorting him well to follow the things which he had spoken; and after that Justin (as he himself witnesseth) saw him no more. Immediately after this, Justin being all inflamed as with fire kindled in his breast, began to conceive a love and zeal towards the prophets, and all such as were favoured of Christ; and thus he, revolving in his mind more and more these words, found only this philosophy among all other professions both sure and profitable, and so became he a philosopher, and in time by these means afterwards he was made a Christian, and baptized. But where he received this holy sacrament of baptism it is not read of, nor yet by what occasion he left his country, and came to Rome. This only we read in Jerome, that he was in Rome, and there used certain exercises, which he called *Diatribas*, disputing there with Crescens, a Cynical philosopher, as is before touched. But this is certain, how that Justin, after he had received the profession

profession of Christian religion, became an earnest defender of the same, travelling and disputing against all the adversaries thereof, fearing neither peril of life, nor danger of death, whereby he might maintain the doctrine of Christ against the malicious blasphemers, and also augment the number of Christian believers, as may appear by his vehement disputations against the Heathen philosophers; also, moreover, it well appeareth in that long disputation which he had with one Tripho at Ephesus, as also in his confutations of heretics. Furthermore, his conflicts and apologies, which, with great courage and security, he exhibited against the persecutors of the Christians, both to the emperor and the magistrates, yea, and the whole senate of Rome, do testify the same.

Of the which apologies, the first he wrote to the senate of Rome, and after to Antoninus Pius the emperor, as is before mentioned; where in the first, writing with great liberty to the senate, he declared, that of necessity he was compelled to write, and utter his mind and conscience to them; for that in persecuting of the Christians they did neglect their duty, and highly offended God, and therefore need they had to be admonished. And further, writing to Urbicius, lieutenant of the city, said, that he put men to death and torments for no offence committed, but for the confession only of the name of Christ; which proceedings and judgments neither became the emperor, nor his son, nor the senate; defending moreover in the said apology, and purging the Christians of such crimes as falsely were laid and objected against them by the Ethnics.

And likewise in his second apology, writing to Antoninus the emperor, and his successors, with like gravity and free liberty declareth unto them how they had the name commonly being reputed and taken as virtuous philosophers, maintainers of justice, lovers of learning; but whether they were so, their acts declared. As for him, neither for flattery nor favour at their hands, he was constrained thus to write unto them, but only to sue unto them, and desire a serious and righteous kind of dealing in their judgments and sentences; (for it becometh princes to follow uprightness and piety in their judgments, not tyranny and violence);  
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and also in plain words chargeth as well the emperor as the senate with manifest wrong, for that they did not grant the Christians that which is not denied to all other malefactors, judging men to death not convicted, but only for the hatred of the name. Other men which be appeached (saith he) in judgment, are not condemned before they are convicted; but on us you take our name only for the crime, when as indeed you ought to see justice done upon our accusers. And again, (saith he), if a Christian being accused only deny that name, him you release, being not able to charge him with any other offence: but if he stand to his name, only for his confession you cast him; where indeed it were your duty rather to examine their manner of life, what thing they confess or deny, and according to their demerits to see justice done.

And in the same further he saith, You examine not the causes, but incensed with rash affections, as with the spur of fury, ye slay and murder them not convicted, without any respect of justice. And further he addeth: Some peradventure will say, certain of them have been apprehended and taken in evil doings; as though (saith he) you used to inquire upon them being brought afore you, and not commonly to condemn them before due examination of their offence, for the cause above mentioned. Where also, in the end of the said apology, after this manner he reprehendeth them: You do degenerate (quoth he) from the goodness of your predecessors, whose example you follow not, for your father Hadrian, of famous memory, caused to be proclaimed, that Christians accused before the judge should not be condemned, unless they were found guilty of some notorious crime. I find that all his vehement and grave apology standeth upon most strong and firm probations, denying that the Christians ought by conscience, at the will and commandment of the emperor and senate, to do sacrifice to the idols; for the which they being condemned, affirm that they suffer open wrong: affirming, moreover, that the true and only religion is the religion of the Christians, whose doctrine and conversation hath no fault. Justinus, although with these and such like persuasions he did not so prevail with the emperor, to cause him to love his religion,

religion, and become a Christian, (for that is not written); yet thus much he obtained, that Antoninus, writing to his officers in Asia in the behalf of the Christians, required and commanded them, that those Christians only which were found guilty of any trespass should suffer, and such as were not convicted, should not therefore only for the name be punished, because they were called Christians. By these it is apparent with what zeal and faith this Justinus did strive against the persecutors, which (as he said) could kill only, but could not hurt.

This Justinus, by the means and malice of Crescens the philosopher, (as is before declared), suffered martyrdom under Marcus Antoninus Verus, a little after that Polycarpus was martyred in Asia, as witnesseth Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 16.* Here is to be gathered how Epiphanius was deceived in the time of his death, saying, that he suffered under Rusticus the president, and Hadrian the emperor, being of thirty years of age; which indeed agreeth neither with Eusebius, nor Hierome, nor Suide, nor others more, which manifestly declare and testify how he exhibited his apology unto Antoninus Pius which came after Hadrian. Thus hast thou (good reader) the life of this learned and blessed martyr, although partly touched before, yet now more fully and amply discoursed, for the better commendation of his excellent and notable virtues; of whose final end thus writeth Photius, saying, that he suffering for Christ died cheerfully and with honour.

Thus have ye heard the whole discourse of Justinus, and of the blessed saints of France, Vetius, Zacharias, Sanctus, Maturus, Attalus, Blandina, Alexander, Alcibiades, with others, recorded and set forth by the writing of certain Christian brethren of the same church and place of France. In the which foresaid writing of theirs, moreover, appeareth the great meekness, and modest constancy of the said martyrs, described in these words: Such followers were they of Christ, (who when he was in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, being in the same glory with him), that they not once nor twice, but oftentimes suffered martyrdom; and taken again from the beasts, and bearing wounds, tearings, and scars in their bodies: yet nei-

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ther would count themselves martyrs, neither would they suffer us so to call them; but if any of us, either by word or letter, would call them martyrs, they did vehemently rebuke them, saying, That the name of martyrdom was to be given to Christ the faithful and true martyr, the first-born of the dead, and the captain of life; testifying, moreover, that martyrdom belongeth to such, who by their martyrdom were already passed out of this life, and whom Christ, by their worthy confession, hath received unto himself, and hath sealed up their martyrdom by their end finished. As for them which were not yet consummated, they (said they) were not worthy the names of martyrs, but only were humble and worthy confessors, desiring also their brethren with tears to pray without ceasing for their confirmation. Thus they performing indeed that which belongeth to true martyrs, in resisting the Heathen with much liberty and great patience, without all fear of man, being replenished with the fear of God, refused to be named of their brethren for martyrs. And after, in the said writing, it followeth more: They humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God, by which they were greatly exalted; then they rendered to all men a reason of their faith, they accused no man, they loosed all, they bound none, and for them which so evil did intreat them they prayed, following the example of Stephen the perfect martyr, which said, *O Lord, impute not their sin to them.* And after again: Neither did they proudly disdain against them which fell, but of such as they had they imparted to them that lacked, bearing toward them a motherly affection, shedding their plentiful tears for them to God the Father, and prayed for their life and salvation, and as God gave it them, they also did communicate to their neighbours; and thus they, as conquerors of all things, departed to God. They loved peace, and leaving the same to us, they went to God, neither leaving any molestation to their mother, nor sedition or trouble to their brethren, but joy, peace, concord, and love to all.

Out of the same writing moreover concerning these martyrs of France afore mentioned, is recorded also another history, not unworthy to be noted, taken out of the same book of Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 3.* which history is this.

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There was among these constant and blessed martyrs, one Alcibiades, as is above specified; which Alcibiades ever used a very strict diet, receiving for his food and sustenance nothing else but only bread and water. When this Alcibiades now being cast into prison, went about to accustom the same strictness of diet, after his usual manner, it was before revealed by God to Attalus afore mentioned, one of the said company, being also the same time imprisoned after his first conflict upon the scaffold, that Alcibiades did not well, in that he refused to use and take the creatures of God, and also thereby ministered to others a pernicious occasion of offensive example. Whereupon Alcibiades being advertised, and reformed, began to take all things boldly, and with giving thanks. Whereby may appear to all scrupulous consciences, not only a wholesome instruction of the Holy Ghost, but also here is to be noted, how in those days they were not destitute of the grace of God, but had the holy Spirit of God to be their instructor. *Hæc Euseb.*

The foresaid martyrs of France at the same time commended Irenæus, newly then made minister, with their letters unto Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, as witnesseth Eusebius, in the tenth chapter of the said book; which Irenæus first was the hearer of Polycarpus, then made minister (as is said) under these martyrs; and after their death made bishop afterward of Lions in France, and succeeded after Photinus. Besides this Justinus, there was also the same time in Asia Claudius Apollinaris, or Apollinarius, bishop of Hieropolis, and also Melito, bishop of Sardis, an eloquent and learned man, much commended of Tertullian, who succeeding after the time of the apostles, in the reign of this Antoninus Verus, exhibited unto him learned and eloquent apologies in defence of Christ's religion, like as Quadratus and Aristides above mentioned did unto the emperor Hadrian, whereby they moved him somewhat to stay the rage of his persecution. In like manner did this Apollinaris and Melito (stirred up by God), adventure to defend in writing the cause of the Christians unto this Antoninus. Of this Melito, Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 26.* making mention, excerpteth certain places of his apology in these words, as followeth: Now, saith he, which was never seen

before, the godly suffer persecution by occasion of certain proclamations and edicts proclaimed throughout Asia; for villanous sycophants, robbers, and spoilers of other mens goods, grounding themselves upon those proclamations, and taking occasion of them, rob openly night and day, and spoil those which do no harm. And it followeth after; Which if it be done by your commandment, be it so, well done; for a good prince will never command but good things, and so we will be contented to sustain the honour of this death. This only we most humbly beseech your majesty, that calling before you, and examining the authors of this tumult and contention, then your grace would justly judge whether we are worthy of cruel death or quiet life. And then if it be not your pleasure, and that it proceedeth not by your occasion, (which indeed against your barbarous enemies were too bad), the more a great deal we are petitioners to your highness, that hereafter you will vouchsafe to hear us thus so vexed and oppressed with these kind of villanous robberies. And verily our philosophy and doctrine did first among the barbarous take place; which doctrine first in the days of Augustus your predecessor, when it did reign and flourish, thereby your empire became most famous and fortunate; and from that time more and more the state of the Roman empire increased in honour, whereof you most happily were made successor, and so shall your son too. Honour therefore this philosophy which with your empire sprang up, and came in with Augustus, which your progenitors above all other honoured and most esteemed. And verily this is no small argument of a good beginning, that since our doctrine flourished in the empire, no misfortune or loss happened from Augustus's time; but contrary, always victory, good and honourable years, as ever any man would wish: only among all, and of all, Nero and Domitian, being kindled by divers naughty and spiteful persons, cavillingly objected against our doctrine; of whom this sycophantical flandering of us by naughty custom first came and sprang up. But your godly fathers, espying the ignorance of these, oftentimes by their writing corrected their temerarious attempts in that behalf; among whom your grandfather Hadrian, with many others, is read  
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of, to have written to Fundane, the proconsul and lieutenant of Asia: and your father, your own father, I say, with whom you ruled in all things, wrote to the cities under his signet, as the Laerfens, Theſſalonicenſes, Athenienſes, and Grecians, rashly to innovate or alter nothing. Of your highness therefore, who in this case is of that sect as your predecessors were, yea, and of a more benign and philosophical mind, we are in good hope to obtain our petition and request.

Thus much out of the apology of Melito, who writing to Onesimus, giveth to us this benefit, to know the true catalogue and the names of all the authentic books of the Old Testament, received in the ancient time of the primitive church. Concerning the number and names whereof, the said Melito in his letter to Onesimus declareth, how that he returning into the parts where these things were done and preached, there he diligently inquired out the books approved of the Old Testament, the names whereof in order he subscribeth, and sendeth unto him as followeth: The five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Jesus Nave, The Judges, Ruth, Four books of Kings, Two books Paralipomenon, The Psalms, Proverbs of Solomon, The book of Wisdom, The Preacher, The Song of Songs, Job, The Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Twelve Prophets in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Esdras. And thus much of this matter which I thought here to record, for that it is not unprofitable for these later times to understand, what in the first times was received and admitted as authentic, and what otherwise.

But from this little digression to return to our matter omitted, that is, to the apologies of Apollinarius and Melito, in the story so it followeth: That whether it was by the occasion of these two apologies, or whether it was through the writing of Athenagoras, a philosopher, and a legate of the Christians, it is uncertain; but this is certain, that the persecution the same time was stayed. Some do think, which most probably seems to touch the truth, that the cause of staying this persecution did rise upon a wonderful miracle of God shewed in the emperor's camp by the Christians, the story whereof is this: At what time the  
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two brethren Marcus Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius Commodus, emperors, joining together, warred against the Quades, Vandales, Sarmates, and Germans, in the expedition against them, their army, by reason of the imminent assault of their enemies, was cooped and shut in within the straits and hot dry places, where their soldiers, besides other difficulties of battle, being destitute of water five days, were like to have perished, which dread not a little discomfited them, and abated their courage; where, in this so great distress and jeopardy, suddenly withdrew from the army a legion of the Christian soldiers for their succour, who falling prostrate upon the earth, by ardent prayer, by and by obtained of God double relief; by means of whom, God gave certain pleasant showers from the element, whereby as their soldiers quenched their thirst, so were a great number of their enemies discomfited and put to flight by continual lightnings which shoot out of the air. This miracle so pleased and won the emperor, that ever after he waxed gentler and gentler to the Christians, and directed his letters to divers of his rulers, (as Tertullian in his apology witnesseth), commanding them therein to give thanks to the Christians, no less for his victory, than for the preservation of him and all his men. The copy of which letter ensueth.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus emperor, to the senate and people of Rome.

**I** Give you hereby to understand what I intend to do, as also what success I have had in my wars in Germany, and with how much difficulty I have victualled my camp, being compassed about with seventy and four fierce dragons, whom my scouts descried to be within nine miles of us, and Pompeianus our lieutenant hath viewed, as he signified unto us by his letters. Wherefore I thought no less but to be over-run, and all my bands of so great multitude, as well my vaward, mainward, as rereward, with all my soldiers of Ephrata; in whose host there were numbered of fighting men, nine hundred seventy and five thousand.

But

But when I saw myself not able to encounter with the enemy, I craved aid of our country-gods: at whose hands I finding no comfort, and being driven of the enemy unto an exigent, I caused to be sent for those men which we call Christians, who being mustered were found a good indifferent number, with whom I was in further rage than I had good cause, as afterwards I had experience by their marvellous power; who forthwith did their endeavour, but without either weapon, munition, armour, or trumpets, as men abhorring such preparation and furniture, but only satisfied in trust of their God, whom they carry about with them in their consciences. It is therefore to be credited, although we call them wicked men, that they worship God in their hearts. For they falling prostrate upon the ground, prayed not only for me, but for the host also which was with me, beseeching their God for help in that our extremity of victuals and fresh water; for we had been now five days without water, and were in our enemies land, even in the midst of Germany; who thus falling upon their faces, made their prayer to a God unknown of me. And there fell amongst us from heaven a most pleasant and cold shower, but amongst our enemies a great storm of hail mixt with lightning, so that immediately we perceived the invincible aid of the most mighty God to be with us: therefore we give those men leave to profess Christianity, lest, perhaps, by their prayer we be punished with the like, and thereby I make myself the author of such hurt as shall be received by the Christian profession. And if any shall apprehend one that is a Christian, only for that cause, I will that he being apprehended, without punishment may have leave to confess the same, so that there be none other cause objected against him, more than that he is a Christian; but let his accuser be burned alive. Neither will I that he confessing and being found a Christian, shall be enforced to alter the same his opinion by the governor of any of our provinces, but left to his own choice. And this decree of mine I will to be ratified in the senate-house, and command the same publicly to be proclaimed and read in the court of Trajanus; and that further from thence it may be sent into all our provinces by the diligence of Veratius, governor of  
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our city Polione. And further, we give leave to all men to use and write out this our decree, taking the same out of our copy publicly in the common-hall set forth.

Thus the tempestuous rage of persecution against the Christians, began for a time to assuage, partly by the occasion hereof, partly also upon other causes incident, compelling the enemies to surcease their persecution, as great plagues and pestilence lying upon the country of Italy; likewise great wars, as well in the east parts, as also in Italy and France, terrible earthquakes, great floods, noisome swarms of flies and vermin devouring their corn-fields, &c. And thus much of things done under Antoninus Verus; which Antoninus, in the beginning of his reign, joined with him in the government of the empire his brother Marcus Aurelius Commodus, who also was with him at the miraculous victory gotten by the Christians, as Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 5.* recordeth. Contrary, *Platina in vita soteris*, and the book entitled, *Floris Historiarum*, refer the same to the time of Antoninus Verus, and his son Lucius Antoninus Commodus, and not of Marcus Aurelius Commodus his brother. But howsoever the truth of years *Anno 175.* doth stand, certain it is, that after the death of Antoninus Verus, and of Aurelius Commodus, succeeded Lucius Antoninus Commodus, the son of Verus, who reigned thirty years.

In the time of this Commodus, although he was an incommodious prince to the senators of Rome, yet notwithstanding there was some quietness universally through the whole church of Christ from persecution; by what occasion it is not certain. Some think, of whom is Xiphilinus, that it came through Marcia the emperor's concubine, which favoured the Christians. But howsoever it came, (saith Eusebius), the fury of the raging enemies was then somewhat mitigated, and peace was given by the grace of Christ unto the church throughout the whole world; at what time, the wholesome doctrine of the gospel allured and reduced the hearts of all sorts of people unto the true religion of God, insomuch that many, both rich and noble personages  
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of Rome, with their whole families and households, to their salvation, adjoined themselves to the church of Christ.

Among whom there was one Apollonius, a nobleman, and a senator of Rome, mentioned in Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 21.* who being maliciously accused unto the senate, by one whom Hierome writeth to be the servant of the said Apollonius, and nameth him Severus: but whose servant soever he was, the wretched man came soon enough before the judge, being condignly rewarded for that his malicious diligence; for by a law which the emperor made, That no man upon pain of death should falsely accuse the Christians, he was put to execution, and had his legs broken forthwith by the sentence of Perenninus the judge, which, being an Heathen man, he pronounced against him. But the beloved martyr of God, when the judge with much ado had obtained of him to render an account, before the honourable senate, of his faith, under whose defence and warrant of life he did the same, delivered unto them an eloquent apology of the Christian belief: but notwithstanding of the former warrant; he, by the decree of the senate, was beheaded, and so ended his life; for that there was an ancient law among them decreed, That none that professed Christ, and therefor arraigned, should be released without recantation, or altering his opinion.

This Commodus is said in stories to be sure and steady handed in casting the dart, that in the open theatre, before the people, he would encounter with the wild beasts, and be sure to hit them in place where he appointed. Among divers other his vitious and wild parts, he was so far surpris'd in pride and arrogancy, that he would be called Hercules, and many times would shew himself to the people in the skin of a lion, to be counted thereby the king of men, like as the lion is of the beasts.

Upon a certain time, being his birth-day, this Commodus calling the people of Rome together, in a great royalty having his lion's skin upon him, made sacrifice to Hercules and Jupiter, causing it to be cried through the city, that Hercules was the patron and defender of the city. There was the same time at Rome Vincentius, Eusebius, Peregrinus, Potentianus, learned men, and instructors of the  
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people, who, following the steps of the apostles, went about from place to place where the gospel was not yet preached, converting the Gentiles to the faith of Christ. These, hearing the madness of the emperor, and of the people, began to reprove their idolatrous blindness, teaching in villages and towns all that heard them, to believe upon the true and only God, and to come away from such worshipping of devils, and to give honour to God alone, which only is to be worshipped, willing them to repent and to be baptized, lest they perished with Commodus. With this their preaching they converted one Julius, a senator, and others, to the religion of Christ. The emperor hearing thereof, caused them to be apprehended of Vitellus his captain, and to be compelled to sacrifice unto Hercules; which when they stoutly refused, after divers grievous torments, and great miracles by them done, at last they were pressed with leaden weights to death. *Vincentius, lib. 10. cap. 119. and Chron. Henr. de Erfordia.*

This Peregrinus above mentioned had been sent before by Xistus, bishop of Rome, into the parts of France, to supply there the room of a bishop and teacher, by reason that for the continual and horrible persecutions thereabout touched, those places were left desolate and destitute of ministers and instructors; where, after he had occupied himself with much fruit among the flock of Christ, and had stablished the congregation there, returning home again to Rome, there he finished at last (as it is said) his martyrdom.

Now remaineth likewise to speak of Julius: which Julius being (as is afore described) a senator of Rome, and now won by the preaching of these blessed men to the faith of Christ, did eftsoons invite them, and brought them home to his house, where, being by them more fully instructed in Christian religion, he believed the gospel; and sending for one Ruffinus a priest, was, with all his family, by him baptized; who did not (as the common sort was wont to do) keep close and secret his faith, but incensed with a marvellous and sincere zeal, openly professed the same, altogether wishing and praying to be given to him by God, not only to believe in Christ, but also to hazard his life for him. Which thing  
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the emperor hearing, how that Julius had forsaken his old religion, and become a Christian, forthwith sent for him to come before him, unto whom he spake on this wise: O Julius, what madness hath possessed thee, that thus thou dost fall from the old and common religion of thy forefathers, who acknowledged and worshipped Jupiter and Hercules their gods, and now dost embrace a new and fond kind of religion of the Christians? At which time Julius, having good occasion to shew and open his faith, gave straightway account thereof to him, and affirmed that Hercules and Jupiter were false gods, and how the worshippers of them should perish with eternal damnation and punishments. Which the emperor hearing how that he condemned and despised his gods, being then inflamed with a great wrath, (as he was by nature very choleric), committed him forthwith to Vitellus, the master of the soldiers, a very cruel and fierce man, to see Julius either to sacrifice to mighty Hercules, or refusing the same to slay him. Vitellus, as he was commanded, exhorted Julius to obey the emperor's commandment, and to worship his gods, alledging how that the whole empire of Rome was not only constituted, but also preserved and maintained by them: which Julius denied utterly to do, admonishing sharply in like manner Vitellus to acknowledge the true God, and obey his commandments, lest he, with his master, should die some grievous death; whereat Vitellus being moved, caused Julius with cudgels to be beaten unto death.

These things being thus briefly recited, touching such holy martyrs as hitherto have suffered, now remaineth that we return again to the order of the Roman bishops, such as followed next after Alexander, at whom we left, whose succeder next was Xistus or Sixtus, the sixth bishop counted after Peter, who governed that ministry the space of ten years, as Damasus and others do write. Urspergensis maketh mention but of nine years. Platina recordeth, that he died a martyr, and was buried at Vatican. But Eusebius speaking of his decease, maketh no word or mention of any martyrdom. In the second tome of the councils, certain epistles be attributed to him, whereof Eusebius, Damasus, Hierome, and other old authors, as they make



no relation, so seem they to have no intelligence nor knowledge of any such matter. In these counterfeit epistles, and in Platina, it appeareth, that Xistus was the first author of these ordinances. First, That the holy mysteries, and holy vessels, should be touched but only of persons holy and consecrated, especially of no woman. *Item*, That the corporas cloth, should be made of no other cloth but of fine linen. *Item*, That such bishops as were called up to the apostolic see, returning home again, should not be received at their return, unless they brought with them letters from the bishop of Rome saluting the people. *Item*, At the celebration he ordained to be sung this verse, *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabboth*. Where, moreover, it is to be noted, that the said Platina, in the life of this Xistus, doth testify, that Peter ministered the celebration of the communion only with the Lord's prayer. These trifling ordinances of Xistus, who is so rude that seeth not, or may not easily conjecture to be falsely fathered of Xistus, or of any father of that time? first by the uniform rudeness and stile of all those decretal-letters, nothing favouring of that age, but rather of the later dunstical times that followed; also by the matter and argument in those letters contained, nothing agreeing with the state of those troublesome days. Neither again is it to be supposed, that any such recourse of bishops was then to the apostolical see of Rome, that it was not lawful to return without their letters; when as the persecution against the Christians was then so hot, in the days of Hadrian, that the bishops of Rome themselves were more glad to fly out of the city, than other bishops were to come to them unto Rome. And if Xistus added the *Sanctus* unto the mass-canon, what piece then of the canon went before it, when they which put to the other patches came after Xistus? And if they came after Xistus that added the rest, why did they set their pieces before his, seeing they that began the first piece of the canon, came after him?

The same likewise is to be judged of the epistles and ordinances of Telesphorus, who succeeded next unto Xistus, and being bishop of that congregation the term of eleven years, the first year of the reign of Antoninus Pius, died  
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martyr about the year of our Lord, one hundred thirty and eight. His epistle, like unto the rest, containing in it no great matter of doctrine, hath these ordinances. First, he commandeth all that were of the clergy to fast and abstain from flesh-eating seven weeks before Easter; that three masses should be said upon the nativity-day of the Lord; that no lay-man should accuse either bishop or priest. He ordained, moreover, *Gloria in excelsis*, to be added to the mass, &c. But these things falsely to be feigned upon him may easily be conjectured. For as touching the seven weeks fast, neither doth it agree with the old Roman term commonly received, calling it *Quadragesima*, that is, the forty days fast; neither with the example of our Saviour, who fasted not seven weeks, but only forty days. Moreover, as concerning this forty days fast, we read of the same in the epistle of Ignatius, which was long before Telesphorus; whereby it may appear, that this Telesphorus was not the first inventor thereof. And if it be true that is lately come out in the name of Abdias, (but untruly, as by many conjectures may be proved), there it is read, that in the days of St Matthew, this Lent-fast of forty days was observed long before Telesphorus, by these words that follow: "In the days (said he) either of Lent, or in the time of other lawful fastings, he that abstaineth not as well from eating meat as also from the mixture of bodies, doth incur in so doing, not only pollution, but also committeth offence, which must be washed away with the tears of repentance." Again, Apollonius affirmeth, that Montanus the heretic was the first deviser and bringer in of these laws of fasting into the church, which before was used to be free, *Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 18.* But especially by Socrates, writer of the ecclesiastical story, who lived after the days of Theodosius, it may be argued, that this seven weeks fast is falsely imputed to Telesphorus. For Socrates in his first book, speaking of this time, hath these words, *Romani namque tres ante Pascha septimanas præter Sabbatum & Dominicam continuas jejunt*; that is, The Romans (saith he) do fast three weeks continually before Easter, beside the Sabbath and the Sunday. And, moreover, speaking of the divers and sundry fastings of Lent in sundry and divers churches,

churches, he addeth these words, "And because that no man can bring forth any commandment written of this matter, it is therefore apparent, that the apostles left this kind of fast free to every man's will and judgment, lest any should be constrained by fear and necessity to do that which is good," &c. With this of Socrates agree also the words of Sozomenus, living much about the same time, in his seventh book, *cap.* 19. where he thus writeth: "The whole fast of Lent (saith he) some comprehend in six weeks, as do the Illirians, and the west churches, with all Lybia, Egypt, and Palestina; some in seven weeks, as at Constantinople, and the parts bordering to Phenicia; other some in three weeks, next before the day of Easter; and some again in two weeks," &c. By the which it may be collected, that Telesphorus never ordained any such fast of seven weeks; which otherwise neither would have been neglected in Rome, and in the west churches; neither again would have been unremembered of these ancient ecclesiastical writers, if any such thing had been. The like is to be thought also of the rest, not only of his constitutions, but also of the other ancient bishops and martyrs which followed after him, as of Higinus in the year of our Lord one hundred forty and two, who succeeding him, and dying also a martyr, as Volateranus, *lib.* 22. declareth, is said, or rather feigned to bring in the cream, one godfather and godmother in baptism, to ordain the dedication of churches; whereas in his time so far it was off, that any solemn churches were standing in Rome, that owneth the Christians could safely convent in their own houses. Likewise the distinguishing the orders of metropolitans, bishops, and other degrees, favour nothing less than of that time.

After Higinus followed Pius, who, as Platina reporteth, was so precisely devout about the holy mysteries of the Lord's table, that if any one crumb thereof did fall down to the ground, he ordained that the priest should do penance forty days; if any fell upon the superaltar, he should do penance three days; if upon the linen corporas cloth, four days; if upon any other linen cloth, nine days. And if any drop of the blood (saith he) should chance to be spilled, wheresoever it fell, it should be licked up,



up, if it were possible; if not, the place should be washed or pared, and so being washed or pared, should be burned, and laid in the vestry. All which toys may seem to a wise man more vain and trifling, than to favour of those pure and strict times of those holy martyrs. This Pius (as is reported) was much conversant with Hermes, called otherwise Pastor. Damasus saith he was his brother. But how is that like, that Hermes being the disciple of Paul, or one of the threescore disciples, could be the brother of this Pius? Of this Hermes, and of the revelations the foresaid Pius in his epistle-decretal (if it be not forged) maketh mention, declaring, that unto him appeared the angel of God in the habit of a shepherd, commanding him that Easter-day should be celebrated of all men upon no other day but on a Sunday: whereupon, saith the epistle, Pius the bishop, by his authority apostolical, decreed and commanded the same to be observed of all men.

Then succeeded Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, about the year of our Lord one hundred and fourscore. This Eleutherius, at the request of Lucius, king of Britain, sent to him Damianus and Fugatius, by whom the king was converted to Christ's faith, and baptized, about the year of our Lord one hundred threescore and nineteen. Naclerus, *lib. Chron. Gen.* 6. saith, it was in the year one hundred fifty and six. Henricus de Erfordia saith, it was in the year one hundred threescore and nine, in the nineteenth year of Verus the emperor. Some say it was in the sixth year of Commodus, which should be about the year of our Lord one hundred fourscore and five. Timotheus in his story thinketh, that Eleutherius came himself: but that is not like. And as there is a variance among the writers for the count of years; so doth there rise a question among some, whether Eleutherius was the first that brought the faith from Rome into this land or not? Nicephorus, *lib. 4. cap. 4.* saith, that Simon Zelotes came into Britain. Some others alledge, out of *Gildas de victoria, Aurel. Ambrosi.* that Joseph of Arimathea, after the dispersion of the Jews, was sent by Philip the apostle from France to Britain, about the year of our Lord threescore and three, and here remained in this land all his time, and so, with his fellows, laid the first foundation

foundation of Christian faith among the British people; Whereupon other preachers and teachers coming afterward confirmed the same, and increased it more. And therefore doth Petrus Cluniacensis call the Scottishmen, and so doth count them as more ancient Christians. For the confirmation hereof might be alledged the testimony of Origen, of Tertullian, and the words also of the letter of Eleutherius, which import no less but that the faith of Christ was here in England among the British people before Eleutherius's time, and before the king was converted.

About this time of Commodus afore mentioned, among divers other learned men, and famous teachers, whom God stirred up at that time (as he doth at all other times raise up some) in his church, to confound the persecutors by learning and writing, as the martyrs to confirm the truth with their blood, was Serapion bishop of Antioch, Egesippus, a writer of the ecclesiastical history from Christ's passion to his time, as witnesseth Hierome and Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 8. & 22.* which books of his be not now remaining; and those that be remaining (which be five, *De excidio Hierosol.*) be not mentioned, neither of Hierome, Eusebius, nor of Miltiades, which also wrote his apology in defence of Christian religion, as did Melito, Quadratus, and Aristides before mentioned. About the same time also wrote Heraclitus, who first began to write annotations and enarrations upon the New Testament, and epistles of the apostles. Also Theophilus bishop of Cæsarea, Dionysius bishop of Corinth, a man famously learned, which wrote divers epistles to divers churches, and among others writeth, exhorting Penitus, a certain bishop, *Ne grave servandæ castitatis onus necessario fratribus imponat, sed multorum sese imbecillitati attemperet;* that is, "That he would lay no yoke of chastity of any necessity upon his brethren; but that he would consider the infirmity of others, and bear with it." Eusebius, *lib. 4. cap. 23.* Moreover, the said Dionysius in his epistles, writing of Dionysius Areopagita, declareth of him, how that he was first converted to the Christian faith by St Paul, according as in the Acts is recorded, and afterward was made the first bishop of Athens, but maketh there no mention of his book *De Hierarchia.* Whereby it may

may easily appear, what is to be judged of that book. Furthermore, by the epistles of the said Dionysius of Corinth, this we have to understand to be the use at that time in churches, to read the letters and epistles, such as were sent by learned bishops and teachers unto the congregations, as may appear by these words of Dionysius, who, writing to the church of the Romans, and to Soter, saith, This day we celebrate the holy Dominical day, in which we have read your epistle, which always we will read for our exhortation, like as we do read also the epistle of Clement sent to us before, &c. Eusebius *ibid.* Where also mention is made of keeping Sunday holy, whereof we find no mention made in ancient authors before his time, except only in Justinus Martyr, who in his description declareth two times most especially used for Christian men to congregate together: first, when any convert was to be baptized, the second was upon the Sunday, which was wont for two causes then to be hallowed: first, because (saith he) upon that day God made the world; secondly, because that Christ upon that day first shewed himself after his resurrection to his disciples, &c.

Over and beside these above named, about the days of Commodus wrote also Clemens Alexandrinus, a man of notable and singular learning, whose books, although for a great part be lost, yet certain of them yet remain, wherein is declared, among other things, the order and number of the books and gospels of the New Testament, &c.

The same time, moreover, lived Pantenus, which was the first in Alexandria that professed in open school to read, of whom is thought first to proceed the order and manner among the Christians to read and profess in universities. This Pantenus, for his excellency of learning, was sent by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, to preach to the Indians, where he found the gospel of St Matthew written in Hebrew, left there by St Bartholomew; which book afterward he brought with him from thence to the library of Alexandria.

During all the reign of Commodus, God granted rest and tranquillity, although not without some bloodshed of certain holy martyrs, as is above declared, unto his church.



In the which time of tranquillity, the Christians having now some leisure from the foreign enemy, began to have a little contention among themselves about the ceremony of Easter: which contention albeit of long time before had been stirring in the church, as is before mentioned of Polycarpus and Anicetus; yet the variance and difference of that ceremony brought no breach of Christian concord and society among them. Neither as yet did the matter exceed so far, but that the bond of love, and communion of brotherly life continued, although they differed in the ceremony of the day. For they of the west church pretending the tradition of Paul and Peter, but indeed being the tradition of Hermes and of Pius, kept one day, which was upon the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the first month. The church of Asia, following the ordinance of John the apostle, observed another, as more shall be declared, (the Lord willing), when we come to the time of Victor bishop of Rome. In the mean time, as concerning the fourth persecution, let this hitherto suffice.

### The fifth Persecution.

**A**fter the death of Commodus reigned Pertinax but few months; after whom succeeded Severus, under whom was raised the fifth persecution against the Christian saints: who reigning the term of eighteen years, the first ten years of the same was very favourable and courteous to the Christians; afterward, through sinister suggestions, and malicious accusations of the malignant, was so incensed against them, that by proclamations he commanded no Christians any more to be suffered. Thus the rage of the emperor being inflamed against them, great persecution was stirred up on every side, whereby an infinite number of martyrs were slain, as Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 2.* recordeth, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred and five. The crimes and false accusations objected against the Christians, are partly touched before; as sedition and rebellion against the emperor, sacrilege, murdering of infants, incestuous pollution,

tion, eating raw flesh, libidinous commixture, whereof certain indeed, called then Gnostici, were infamed. *Item*, It was objected against them for worshipping the head of an ass; which whereof it should rise, I find no certain cause, except it were perhaps by the Jews. Also they were charged for worshipping the sun, for that peradventure before the sun did rise, they convented together, singing their morning hymns unto the Lord, or else because they prayed toward the east: but specially for that they would not with them worship their idolatrous gods, and were counted as enemies to all men, &c.

The captains and presidents of this persecution under the emperor, were Hilerianus, Vigellius, Claudius, Hermianus, ruler of Cappadocia, Cecilius, Capella, Vespronius, also Demetrius, mentioned of Cyprian, and Aquila, judge of Alexandria, of whom Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 5.* maketh relation,

The places where the force of this persecution most raged, were Africa, Alexandria, Cappadocia, and Carthage. The number of them that suffered in this persecution, by the report of the ecclesiastical story, was innumerable. Of whom the first was Leonides the father of Origen, who was beheaded: with whom also Origen his son, being of the age then of seventeen years, should have suffered (such a fervent desire he had to be martyred for Christ), had not his mother privily in the night-season conveyed away his cloaths and his shirt. Whereupon more for shame to be seen, than for fear to die, he was constrained to remain at home. And when he could do nothing else, yet he writeth to his father a letter with these words: *Cave tibi, ne quid propter nos aliud quam martyrii constanter faciendi propositum cogites*; that is, "Take heed to yourself, that you turn not your thought and purpose for our sake," &c. Such a fervency had this Origen, being yet young, to the doctrine of Christ's faith, by the operation of God's heavenly providence, and partly also by the diligent education of his father, who brought him up from his youth most studiously in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of holy scripture, wherein he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would move questions to his father of the meaning of this place or that

place in the scripture; insomuch that his father divers times would uncover his breast being asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God which had made him so happy a father of such a happy child. After the death of his father, and all his goods confiscated to the emperor, he, with his poor mother, and six brethren, were brought to such extreme poverty, that he did sustain both himself and them by teaching a school; till at length, being weary of the profession, he transferred his study only to the knowledge and seeking of divine scripture, and such other learning conducive to the same. So much he profited both in the Hebrew and other tongues, that he conferred the Hebrew text with the translation of the threescore: and, moreover, did confer and find out the other translations which we call the common translation of Aquila, of Symmachus, and Theodotion. Also he adjoined to these aforesaid other four translations, whereof more is in the story of Eusebius expressed.

They that write of the life of Origen, testify of him that he was of wit quick and sharp, much patient of labour, a great traveller in the tongues, of a spare diet, of a strict life, a great faster; his teaching and his living were both one; his going was much barefoot; a strict observer of that saying of the Lord, bidding to have but one coat, &c. He is said to have written so much as seven notaries and so many maids every day could pen. The number of his books, by the account of Hierome, came to seven thousand volumes, the copies whereof he used to sell for three pence, or a little more, for the sustentation of his living. But of him more shall be touched hereafter. So zealous he was in the cause of Christ, and of Christ's martyrs, that he nothing fearing his own peril, would assist and exhort them going to their death, and kiss them, insomuch that he was oft in jeopardy to be stoned of the multitude; and sometimes, by the provision of Christian men, had his house guarded about with soldiers, for the safety of them which daily resorted to hear his readings. And many times he was compelled to shift places and houses, for such as laid wait for him in all places. But great was the providence of God to preserve him in the midst of



all this tempest of Severus. Among others which resorted unto him, and were his hearers, Plutarchus was one, and died a martyr; and with him Serenus his brother, who was burned. The third after these was Heraclides, the fourth Heron, who were both beheaded. The fifth was another Serenus, also beheaded, Rhais, and Potamiena, who was tormented with pitch poured upon her, and martyred with her mother Marcella, who died also in the fire. This Potamiena was of a fresh and flourishing beauty, who, because she could not be removed from her profession, was committed to Basilides, one of the captains there in the army, to see the execution done. Basilides receiving her at the judge's hand, and leading her to the place, shewed her some compassion in repressing the rebukes and railings of the wicked adversaries: for the which Potamiena the virgin, to requite again his kindness, bade him be of good comfort, saying, That she would pray the Lord to shew mercy upon him, and so went she to her martyrdom, which she both strongly and quietly did sustain.

Not long after it happened, that Basilides was required to give an oath in a matter concerning his fellow-soldiers, which thing he denied to do, plainly affirming that he was a Christian; for their oath then was wont to be by their idols and the emperor. At the first he was thought dissemblingly to jest; but after, when he was heard constantly and in earnest to confirm the same, he was had before the judge, and so by him committed to ward. The Christians marvelling thereat, as they came to him in the prison, inquired of him the cause of that his sudden conversion. To whom he answered again, and said, That Potamiena had prayed for him to the Lord, and so he saw a crown put upon his head; adding, moreover, that it should not be long but he should be received. Which things thus done, the next day following he was had to the place of execution, and there beheaded. *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 5.* albeit the said Eusebius giveth this story of no credit, but only of hearsay, as he there expresseth.

As divers and many there were that suffered in the days of this Severus, so some there were again which, through the protection of God his providence, being put to great torments,

torments, yet escaped with life: of whom was one Alexander, who, for his constant confession and torments suffered, was made bishop afterward of Jerusalem, together with Narcissus; who being then an old man of an hundred and threescore years and three, as saith Eusebius, was unwieldy for his age to govern that function alone.

Of this Narcissus it is reported in the ecclesiastical history, *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 9.* that certain miracles by him were wrought, very notable, if they be true. First, of water by him turned into oil, at the solemn vigil of Easter, what time the congregation wanted oil for their lamps. Another miracle is also told of him, which is this: There were three evil disposed persons, who seeing the soundness and grave constancy of his virtuous life, and fearing their own punishment, as a conscience that is guilty is always fearful, thought to prevent his accusations, in accusing him first, and laying an heinous crime unto his charge. And to make their accusation more probable before the people, they bound their accusation with a great oath, one wishing to be destroyed with fire, if he said not true; the other to be consumed with a grievous sickness; the third to lose both his eyes if they did lie. Narcissus, although having his conscience clear, yet not able, being but one man, to withstand their accusation, bound with such oaths, gave place, and removed himself from the multitude into a solitary desert by himself, where he continued the space of many years. In the mean time, to them which so willingly and wickedly forswore themselves, this happened. The first, by casualty of one little small sparkle of fire, was burnt, with his goods, and all his family. The second was taken with a great sickness from the top to the toe, and devoured with the same. The third, hearing and seeing the punishment of the other, confessed his fault; but through great repentance poured out such tears, that he lost both his eyes. And thus was their false perjury punished. Narcissus, after long absence returning home again, was by this means both cleared of the fact, and received into his bishoprick again; to whom, as is said, for impotency of his age, Alexander was joined in execution of the function. *Eusebius, hister. eccles. lib. 6. cap. 10.* Of this Alexander

Alexander is recorded in the said ecclesiastical history, that after his agonies and constancy of his confession shewed in the persecution of Severus, he was admonished by a vision in the night-season to make his journey up to Jerusalem and Palestina, (for that place remained free from this persecution), to see there the congregation, and to pray. Thus he taking his journey, and drawing near to the city, a vision with plain words was given to certain chief heads of Jerusalem to go out of the gate of the city, there to receive the bishop appointed to them of God. And so was Alexander met and received, and joined partner with aged Narcissus, as is before expressed, in the city of Jerusalem, where he continued bishop above forty years, until the persecution of Decius, and there erected a famous library, where Eusebius had his chiefest help in writing his ecclesiastical history. He wrote also divers epistles to divers churches, and licensed Origen openly to teach in his church. At length, being very aged, he was brought from Jerusalem to Cesarea before the judge under Decius, where, after his constant confession the second time, he was committed to prison, and there died.

Besides these that suffered in this persecution of Severus, recited of Eusebius, Vincentius also, *lib. 11. cap. 6. ex martyrologio*, speaketh of one Andoclus, whom Polycarpus before had sent into France; which Andoclus, because he spread there the doctrine of Christ, was apprehended of Severus, and first beaten with staves and bats, after was beheaded.

To these above named, may also be added Asclepiades, who, although he was not put to death in this persecution of Severus, yet constantly he did abide the trial of his confession, and suffered much for the same, as Alexander before mentioned did. Wherefore afterward he was ordained bishop of Antioch, where he continued the space of seven years, of whom Alexander writeth unto the church of Antioch out of prison, much rejoicing and giving thanks to God, to hear that he was their bishop.

About the same time, during the reign of Severus, died Irenæus. Henricus de Erfordia, Ado, and other martyr-writers do hold, that he was martyred, with a great multitude



tude of others more, for the confession and doctrine of Christ, about the fourth or fifth year of Severus. This Irenæus, as he was a great writer, so was he greatly commended of Tertullian for his learning, whom he calleth *omnium doctrinarum curiosissimum exploratorem*, a great searcher of all kind of learning. He was first scholar and hearer of Polycarpus, from thence either was sent, or came to France, and there by Photinus, and the rest of the martyrs, was instituted into the ministry, and commended by their letter to Eleutherius, as is before premonished. At length, after the martyrdom of Photinus, he was appointed bishop of Lions, where he continued about the space of three and twenty years. In the time of this Irenæus the state of the church was much troubled, not only for the outward persecution of the foreign enemy, but also for divers sects and errors then stirring, against which he diligently laboured, and wrote much, although but few of his books be now remaining. The nature of this man, well agreeing with his name, was such, that he ever loved peace, and sought to set agreement when any controversy rose in the church. And therefore, when the question of keeping the Easter-day was renewed in the church between Victor bishop of Rome, and the churches of Asia, and when Victor would have excommunicated them as schismatics, for disagreeing from him therein; Irenæus, with other brethren of the French church, sorry to see such a contention among brethren for such a trifle, convented themselves together in a common council, and directing their letter with their common consent subscribed, sent unto Victor, intreating him to stay his purpose, and not to proceed in excommunicating his brethren for that matter. Although they themselves agreed with him in observing the Sunday Easter as he did; yet with great reasons and arguments they exhorted him not to deal so rigorously with his other brethren, following the ancient custom of their country-manner in that behalf. And beside this, he wrote divers other letters abroad concerning the same contention, declaring the excommunication of Victor to be of no force.

Not long after Irenæus followed also Tertullian, about the time of this Severus and Antoninus Caracalla his son,

a man both in Greek and Latin well expert, having great gifts in disputing, and in writing eloquent, as his books declare, and as the commendation of all learned men doth testify no less. To whom Vincentius Lirienfis giveth such praise, that he calleth him the flower of all Latin writers: and of the eloquence of his stile he thus writeth, that, with the force of his reasons, he saith, whom he could not persuade, them he compelled to consent unto him. How many words, so many sentences, and how many sentences, so many victories he had, &c.

Such men of doing and writing God raised up from time to time, as pillars and stays for his poor church, as he did this Tertullian in these dangerous days of persecution; for when the Christians were vexed with wrongs, and falsely accused of the Gentiles, Tertullian taking their cause in hand, defendeth them against the persecutors, and against their slanderous accusations. First, That they never minded any stir or rebellion, either against the empire or emperors of Rome; for so much as the use of Christians was to pray for the state of their emperors and governors. And whereas they were accused falsely to be enemies to all mankind, how could that be, (saith Tertullian to Scapula), seeing the proper office of the Christians is by their profession to pray for all men, to love their enemies, never requiting evil for evil, when as all other do love but only their friends, and scarcely them? As touching the horrible slander of murdering infants, how can that be true in the Christians, (saith he), whose order is to abstain from all blood and strangled; inso-much that it is not lawful for them to touch the blood of any beast at their tables when they feed? From filthy copulation no sort more free than they, which are, and ever have been, the greatest observers of chastity, of whom, such as may, live in perpetual virginity all their life; such as cannot, contract matrimony, for avoiding all whoredom and fornication. Neither can it be proved that the Christians do worship the sun; which false surmise Tertullian declareth to rise hereof, for that the manner of the Christians was to pray toward the east. Much less was there any of them so mad as to worship an ass's head; whereof the occasion being taken only of the Jews, the slander thereof

therefore he proveth to be falsely and wrongfully laid to the charge of the Christians.

And likewise against all other lies and slanders, objected of the Heathen against the Christians, the said Tertullian purgeth the Christians, declaring them falsely to be belied, and wrongfully persecuted, not for any desert of theirs, but only for the hatred of their name. And yet notwithstanding, by the same persecutions, he proveth in the same apology, the religion of the Christians nothing to be impaired, but rather increased. The more (saith he) we are mown down of you, the more rise up. The blood of Christians is seed. For what man (saith he) in beholding the painful torments, and the perfect patience of them, will not search and inquire what is the cause? And when he hath found it out, who will not agree unto it? And when he agreeth to it, who will not desire to suffer for it? Thus (saith he) this sect will never die, which the more it is cut down, the more it groweth. For every man seeing and wondering at the sufferance of the saints, is moved the more thereby to search the cause; in searching, he findeth it, and finding, he followeth it. *Tertullian. in eodem apolog.*

Thus Tertullian, in this dangerous time of persecution, being stirred up of God, defended the innocency of the Christians against the blasphemy of the adversaries; and, moreover, for the instruction of the church he compiled many fruitful works, whereof some are extant, some are not to be found. Notwithstanding the great learning and famous virtues of this worthy man, certain errors and blemishes are noted in his doctrine, as were before both of Origen and Irenæus, and likewise of them, were they never so excellent that followed them. Which errors all here in order to note and comprehend, were too long a matter for this story to prosecute. This by the way shall be sufficient to admonish the reader, never to look for any such perfection of any man in this world, how singular soever he be, (Christ only excepted), but some blemish or other joineth itself withal, whereof more, perchance, shall be said when we come to Cyprian.

And now, to return again to the order of bishops of Rome intermitted: After Eleutherius afore mentioned, next  
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in the bishoprick of Rome succeeded Victor, who, as Platina saith, died quietly in the days of Severus. But Damasus, *Supplementum*, lib. 8. and such as do follow the common chronicles, affirm, that he died a martyr, after he had sitten ten (or, as some say, twelve) years. This Victor was a great stirrer (as partly before is signified) in the controversy and contention of Easter-day, for the which he would have proceeded in excommunication against the churches of Asia, had not Irenæus, then bishop of Lions, with the council of other his brethren there assembled, repressed his intended violence. As touching that controversy of Easter in those days of the primitive church, the original thereof was this, as Eusebius, Socrates, Platina, and others record. First, Certain it is, that the apostles, being only intèntive and attendant to the doctrine of salvation, gave no heed nor regard to the observation of days and times, neither bound the church to any ceremonies and rites, except those things necessary mentioned in the Acts of the apostles, as strangled and blood, which was ordained then of the Holy Ghost, not without a most urgent and necessary cause, touched partly in the history before. For when the murdering and blood of infants was commonly objected by the Heathen persecutors against the Christians, they had no other argument to help themselves, nor to refel the adversary, but only their own law, by the which they were commanded to abstain, not only from all mens blood, but also from the blood of all common beasts. And therefore that law seemeth by the Holy Ghost to be given, and also to the same end continued in the church, so long as the cause, that is, the persecutions of the Heathen Gentiles continued. Besides these, we read of no other ceremonies or rites, which the apostles greatly regarded, but left such things free to the liberty of Christians, every man to use therein his own discretion, for the using or not using thereof. Whereupon, as concerning all the ceremonial observations of days, times, places, meats, drinks, vestures, and such others; of all these things neither was the diversity among men greatly noted, nor any uniformity greatly required. Insomuch that Irenæus writing to Victor of the tradition of days, and of fastings, and of the diversity of these things then used

among the primitive fathers, faith, *Nihilo tamen minus omnes illi pacem inter se retinuerunt, & retinemus etiamnum, & jejunii dissonantia fidei concordiam commendat, &c.*; that is, "Notwithstanding all this variety, all they kept peace among themselves, and yet we keep it still, and this difference of fasting among us commendeth more the concord of faith." And so long did the doctrine of Christian liberty remain whole and sound in the church till the time of Victor, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred; although the diversity of these usages began before also in the days of Pius and Anicetus, about the year of Christ one hundred sixty and three, to be disliked; yet restraint hereof was not so much urged before, as in the time of Victor. And yet neither did the violence of Victor take such place, but that the doctrine of Christian liberty was defended and maintained by means of Irenæus, and others; and so continued in the church till after the council of Nice. And thus much concerning the doctrine of Christian liberty, and of the differences of rites and ceremonies.

Now, to return to Victor again, to shew what diversity there was in observing the day of Easter, and how it came, thus is the story. First, In the time of Pius and Anicetus, in the year of Christ one hundred sixty and three, the question of Easter-day began first to be moved, at what time Pius, by the revelation of Hermes, decreed the observation of that day to be changed from the wonted manner of the fourteenth day of the moon in the first month unto the next Sunday after. After him came Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, bishops of Rome, which also determined the same. *Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 26.* Against these stood Melito, bishop of Sardis, Polycarpus, and, as some think, Egesippus, with other learned men of Asia. Which Polycarpus, being sent by the brethren of Asia, came to Rome, as is aforesaid, to confer with Anicetus in that matter; wherein when they could not agree, after long debating, yet notwithstanding they did both communicate together with reverence, and departed in peace. And so the celebration of Easter-day remained adiaphoron, as a thing indifferent in the church, till the time of Victor; who, following after Anicetus and his fellows, and chiefly stirring in this matter, endeavour-

ed by all means and might to draw, or rather subdue the churches of Asia unto his opinion; thinking, moreover, to excommunicate all those bishops and churches of Asia, as heretics and schismatics, which disagreed from the Roman order; had not Irenæus otherwise restrained him from that doing, as is aforesaid, which was about the year of our Lord one hundred fourscore and eleven, in the reign of Commodus. Thus then began the uniformity of keeping that holy day to be first required as a thing necessary, and all they accounted as heretics and schismatics, which dissented from the bishop and tradition of Rome.

With Victor stood Theophilus, bishop of Cæsarea, Narcissus of Jerusalem, Irenæus of Lyons, Palmas of Pontus, Banchillus of Corinth, the bishop of Ostroëna, and others more. All which condescend to have the celebration of Easter upon the Sunday, because they would differ from the Jews in all things as near as they might, and partly, because the resurrection of the Lord fell on the same day.

On the contrary side, divers bishops were in Asia, of whom the principal was Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who being assembled with a great multitude of bishops and brethren of those parts, by the common assent of the rest, wrote again to Victor, and to the church of Rome, declaring, that they had ever from the beginning observed that day, according to the rule of scripture, unchanged, neither adding nor altering any thing from the same; alledging, moreover, for them the examples of the apostles and holy fathers their predecessors, as Philip the apostle, with his three daughters at Hieropolis; also John the apostle and evangelist at Ephesus, Polycarpus at Smyrna, Thraseas at Eumenia bishop and martyr; likewise of Sagaris at Laodicea bishop and martyr, holy Papirius, and Melito at Sardis. Beside these, bishops also of his own kindred, and his own ancestors, to the number of seven, which all were bishops before him, and he the eighth now after them. All which observed (saith he) the solemnity of the same day, after the same wise and sort as we do now.

Victor, being not a little moved herewith, by letters again denounceth against them (more bold upon authority, than wise in his commission) violent excommunication, albeit



beit by the wise handling of Irenæus, and other learned men, that matter was staid, and Victor otherwise perswaded. What the persuasions of Irenæus were, partly may appear in *Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 26.* the sum whereof tendeth to this effect: That the variance and difference of ceremonies is no strange matter in the church of Christ, when as this variety is not only in the day of Easter, but also in the manner of fasting, and in divers other usages among the Christians. For some fast one day, some two days, some others fast more. Others there be, which counting forty hours, both day and night, take that for a full day's fast. And this so divers fashion of fasting in the church of Christ began not only in this our time, but was before among our fore-elders. And yet notwithstanding, they, with all this diversity, were in unity among themselves, and so be we; neither doth this difference of ceremonies any thing hinder, but rather commendeth the concord of faith. And he bringeth forth the examples of the fathers, of Telesphorus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, and such others, who neither observed the same usage themselves, nor prescribed it to others, and yet notwithstanding kept Christian charity with such as came to communicate with them, not observing the same form of things which they observed, as well appeared by Polycarpus and Anicetus, which although they agreed not in one uniform custom of rites, yet refused not to communicate together, the one giving reverence unto the other. Thus the controversy, being taken up between Irenæus and Victor, remained free to the time of the Nicene council. *Hæc ex Iren. Eusebius.* And thus much concerning the controversy of that matter, and concerning the doings of Victor.

After Victor succeeded in the see of Rome Zephirinus, in the days of the foresaid Severus, about the year of our Lord two hundred and three. To this Zephirinus be ascribed two epistles, in the first tome of the councils. But as I have said before of the decretal-epistles of other Roman bishops, so I say and verily suppose of this, that neither the countenance of the stile, nor the matter therein contained, nor the condition of the time, doth otherwise give to think of these letters, but that they be verily bastard letters,

letters, not written by these fathers, nor in these times, but craftily and wickedly packt in by some, which, to set up the primacy of Rome, have most pestilently abused the authority of these holy and ancient fathers, to deceive the simple church. For who is so rude, but that, in considering only the state of those terrible times, he may easily understand, (except affection blind him), beside a number of other probable conjectures to lead him, that the poor persecuted bishops in that time would have been glad to have any safe covert to put their heads in? so far was it off, that they had any lust or leisure then to seek for any primacy or patriarchship, or to drive all other churches to appeal to the see of Rome, or to exempt all priests from the accusation of any lay-man; as in the first epistle of Zephirinus is to be seen, written to the bishops of Cicilia; and likewise the second epistle of his to the bishops of the province of Egypt, containing no manner of doctrine, nor consolation necessary for that time, but only certain ritual decrees to no purpose, argueth no less, but the said epistles neither to favour of that man, nor to taste of that time.

Of like credit also seemeth the constitution of the patines of glass, which Damasus saith, that the same Zephirinus ordained to be carried before the priest at the celebration of the mass. Again, Platina writeth, that he ordained the administration of the sacrament to be no more used in vessels of wood, or of glass, or of any other metal, except only silver, gold, and tin, &c. But how these two testimonies of Damasus and Platina join together, let the reader judge; especially seeing the same decree is referred to Urbanus, that came after him. Again, what needed this decree of golden chalices to be established afterward in the council of Tiber and Rhens, if it had been enacted before by Zephirinus? How long this Zephirinus sat, our writers do vary. Eusebius saith, he died in the reign of Caracalla, and sat seventeen years. Platina writeth, that he died under Severus, and sat eight years, and so saith also Nauclerus. Damasus affirmeth, that he sat sixteen years and two months.

Mattheus, author of the story, entitled, *Floris historiarum*, with other later chronicles, maketh mention of Perpetua, and

beit by the wise handling of Irenæus, and other learned men, that matter was staid, and Victor otherwise perswaded. What the persuasions of Irenæus were, partly may appear in *Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 26.* the sum whereof tendeth to this effect: That the variance and difference of ceremonies is no strange matter in the church of Christ, when as this variety is not only in the day of Easter, but also in the manner of fasting, and in divers other usages among the Christians. For some fast one day, some two days, some others fast more. Others there be, which counting forty hours, both day and night, take that for a full day's fast. And this so divers fashion of fasting in the church of Christ began not only in this our time, but was before among our fore-elders. And yet notwithstanding, they, with all this diversity, were in unity among themselves, and so be we; neither doth this difference of ceremonies any thing hinder, but rather commendeth the concord of faith. And he bringeth forth the examples of the fathers, of Telesphorus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, and such others, who neither observed the same usage themselves, nor prescribed it to others, and yet notwithstanding kept Christian charity with such as came to communicate with them, not observing the same form of things which they observed, as well appeared by Polycarpus and Anicetus, which although they agreed not in one uniform custom of rites, yet refused not to communicate together, the one giving reverence unto the other. Thus the controversy, being taken up between Irenæus and Victor, remained free to the time of the Nicene council. *Hæc ex Iren. Eusebius.* And thus much concerning the controversy of that matter, and concerning the doings of Victor.

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and Felicitas, and Revocatus her brother, also of Saturninus and Satyrus brethren, and Secundulus, which in the persecution of this Severus gave over their lives to martyrdom for Christ, being thrown to wild beasts, and devoured of the same in Carthage and in Afric; save that Saturninus brought again from the beasts, was beheaded, and Secundulus died in prison about the year of our Lord two hundred and two, as writeth Florilegus.

This Severus the persecutor reigned, as the most part of writers accord, the term of eighteen years, who about the latter time of his reign, came with his army hither into Britain, where after many conflicts had with the Britons in the borders of the north, he cast up a ditch with a mighty wall made of earth and turfs, and strong stakes, to the length of one hundred thirty and two miles from the one side of the sea to the other, beginning at Tyne, and reaching to the Scottish sea: which done, he removed to York, and there, by the breaking in of the Northern men and the Scots, was besieged and slain, about the year of our Lord two hundred and fourteen, leaving behind him

two sons, Bassianus and Geta. Which Bassianus, surnamed Caracalla, after he had slain his brother Geta here in Britain, governed the empire alone, the space of six years. After whose death, he being slain also of his servants, (as he had slain his brother before), succeeded Maccinus, with his son Diadumenus, to be emperor, who, after they

*Anno 219.* had reigned one year, were both slain of their own people.

After them followed Varius Heliogabalus in the empire, rather to be called a monster than a man, so prodigious was his life in all gluttony, filthiness, and ribaldry. Such was his pomp, that in his lamps he used balm, and filled his fish-ponds with rose water. To let pass his sumptuous vestures, which he would not wear but only of gold, and most costly silks; his shoes glistering with precious stones finely engraved, he was never two days served with one kind of meat; he never wore one garment twice. And likewise for his fleshly wickedness, some days his company was served at meal with the brains of ostriches, and a

strange

strange fowl called Phenicoptery, another day with the tongues of Popinjays, and other sweet-singing birds. Being nigh to the sea, he never used fish: in places far distant from the sea, all his house was served with most delicate fishes: at one supper he was served with seven thousand fishes, and five thousand fowls. At his removing in his progress, often there followed him six hundred chariots laden only with bawds, common harlots, and ribalds. He sacrificed young children, and preferred to the best advancements in the commonwealth most light personages, as bawds, minstrels, carters, and such like. In one word, he was an enemy to all honesty and good order. And when he was foretold by his forcerers and astronomers, that he should die a violent death, he provided ropes of silk to hang himself, swords of gold to kill himself, and strong poison in jacinths and emeralds to poison himself, if needs he must thereto be forced. Moreover, he made an high tower, having the floor of boards covered with gold plate, bordered with precious stones, from the which tower he would throw himself down, if he should be pursued of his enemies. But notwithstanding all his provision, he was slain of the soldiers, drawn through the city, and cast into Tiber, after he had reigned two years and eight months, as witnesseth Eutropius, others say four years.

This Heliogabalus having no issue, adopted to his son and heir Aurelius Alexander Severus, the son of Mammea; who entering his reign the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and four, continued thir- *Anno 224.* teen years, well commended for virtuous, wise, gentle, liberal, and to no man hurtful. And as he was not unlearned himself, through the diligent education of Mammea his mother, so he was a great favourer of men wise and learned. Neither did he any thing in the commonwealth, without the assistance of learned and sage counsellors. It is reported of him to bear such stomach against corrupt judges, that when he chanced to meet with any of them, by the commotion of his mind he would cast up choler, being so moved with them that he could not speak, and was ready with his two fingers to put out their eyes. From his court he dismissed all superfluous and unneedful  
Q servants,



servants, saying, That he was no good pupil, which fed idle servants with the bowels of his commonwealth.

Among his other good virtues, it appeareth also that he was friendly and favourable unto the Christians, as by this act may be gathered: for when the Christians had occupied a certain public place in some good use, belike for the assembling and conventing together of the congregation; the company of the cooks or tiplers made challenge of that place to belong unto them. The matter being brought before the emperor, he judged it more honest the place to be continued to the worship of God, howsoever it were then the dirty slubbing of cooks and scullions.

By this it may be understood, that in Rome no Christian churches were erected unto this time, when as yet (notwithstanding this favour of the emperor) no public house could quietly be obtained for the Christians. So that by the reason hereof may appear the decretal epistle and ordinance of Pope Higinus, concerning the dedication of churches above mentioned to be falsified; and likewise the ordinance of Pius his successor, concerning the altar, or super-altar, to be also false: for what superaltar was it like they had in the time of Higinus and Pius, when as at this time, which was long after, no public place almost could be granted them for the Christians to assemble together?

Of this Alexander, Platina writeth, that as he was a great hater of all boasters and flatterers, so he was of such prudence, that no deceit could escape him; and bringeth in a story of one Turinus, who had gotten craftily many great bribes and gifts, in making the people believe that he was of great authority with the emperor, and that he could help them to have whatsoever they sued for. Whereof the emperor being certified, caused him in the open market to be fastened to a stake, and there killed with smoke, where the crier stood thus crying to the people: Smoke he sold, and with smoke he is punished.

Mammea, the mother of this Alexander, above mentioned, (whom Hierome calleth a devout and religious woman), hearing of the fame and the excellent learning of Origen, being then at Alexandria, sent for him to Antioch, desirous to hear and see him. Unto whom the foresaid Origen, according

according to her request, resorted, and after that he had there remained a space with the emperor and his mother, returned again to Alexandria.

And thus continued this good emperor his reign the space of thirteen years; at length at a commotion in Germany, with his mother Mammea, he was slain: After whom succeeded Maximinus, contrary to the mind of the senate, only appointed by the soldiers to be emperor. During all this time, between Severus and this Maximinus, the church of Christ, although it had not perfect peace, yet it had some mean tranquillity from persecution: albeit some martyrs there were at this time that suffered, whereof Naclerus giveth this reason: For although (saith he) Alexander, being persuaded, through the intreating of his mother Mammea, did favour the Christians; yet, notwithstanding, there was no public edict or proclamation provided for their safeguard. By reason whereof, divers there were which suffered martyrdom under Almachius, and other judges. In the number of whom, after some stories, was Calixtus bishop of Rome, who succeeded next unto Zephirinus above mentioned; and after him Urbanus also, which both being bishops of Rome, did both suffer, by the opinion of some writers, under Alexander Severus.

This Calixtus, in his two decretal-epistles, written to Benedictus, and to the bishops of France, giveth these ordinances, That no actions or accusations against the prelates or teachers of the church should be received; That no secret conspiracies should be made against bishops: *Item*, No man to communicate with persons excommunicate: also, No bishop to excommunicate or to deal in another's diocese. And here he expoundeth the diocese, or the parish of any bishop or minister to be his wife. *The wife* (saith the apostle) *is bound to the law, as long as the husband liveth; when he is dead, she is free from the law*: so (saith Calixtus) the wife of a bishop, (which is his church), so long as he liveth, is bound only to him, neither ought to be judged or disposed by any other man, without his will and judgment, after his death she is free from the law, to marry to whom she will, so it be in the Lord, that is, *regulariter*, regularly. In the end of the said his epistle-decretal, he confuteth the

error of them which hold, that they which are fallen are not to be received again. Which heresy, after the time of Calixtus or Calistus, came in first by Novatus, in the days of Cornelius. Moreover, in his said first epistle-decretal is contained the fast of the four times, commonly called the Ember fast, whereof also Marianus Scotus maketh mention. But Damasus, speaking of the same fast, saith, he ordained the fast but of three times, which was for the increase of corn, wine, and oil.

By these hitherto premised, it is not hard for a quick reader to smell out the crafty-juggling of that person or persons, whosoever they were, that falsely have ascribed these decretal-institutions to those holy fathers. For *first*, What leisure had the Christians to lay in their accusations against their bishops, when we never read or find in any story any kind of variance in those days among them, but all love, mutual compassion, and hearty communion among the saints? And as we read of no variance among the people in those days, nor of any fault or backsliding among the bishops, who for the most part then died all constant martyrs; so neither do we read of any tribunal-seat or consistory used or frequented then about any such matters. Again, if a man examine well the dangers of those busy days, he shall see the poor flock of the Christians so occupied and piteously oppressed by the cruel accusations of the Heathen infidels, that though the cause did, yet the time would not serve them to commence any law against their bishops. *Secondly*, As touching their conspiracy against bishops, what conspiracy either would they then practise against them, which always gave their lives for their defence? Or how could they then conspire in any companies together, when never a true Christian man durst once put his head out of his doors? Neither was there in the church any Christian man in those perilous days, except he were a true man indeed, such as was far from all false conspiracies. And when as all the world almost in all places conspired against them, what time, what cause, or what heart, trow ye, could they have to conspire against their instructors? *Thirdly*, Concerning the confutation of that heresy, how standeth the confutation with the time of Calixtus, when

Novatus



Novatus the author of that heresy was after him in the time of Cornelius? *Fourthly*, If by the law of Calixtus, every diocess be the proper wife of every bishop or minister, then how many bishops wives, and parsons wives, had the adulterous Pope of Rome defloured in these latter days of the church, which so proudly, and impudently hath intermeddled and taken his pleasure, and his own profit, in every diocess and parish almost through all Christendom, without all leave and licence of the good man who hath been in the mean time, and yet is compelled still, where-soever the Pope's holiness cometh, *Vigilante stertere naso*, and to give him leave unasked to do what he list? Wherefore if this canon-decretal be truly his, why is it not observed, so as it doth stand without exception? If it be not, why is it then falsely forged upon him, and the church of Christ deceived? And certes, lamentable it is, that this falsifying of such trifling traditions, under the false pretence of antiquity, either was begun in the church to deceive the people; or that it hath remained so long undetected. For, as I think, the church of Christ will never be perfectly reformed, before these decretal constitutions and epistles, which have so long put on the visor of antiquity, shall be fully detected, and appear in their own colour wherein they were first painted.

And yet neither do I say this, or think contrary, but that it may be, that bishops of Rome, and of the same name, have been the true authors of these traditions. But here cometh in the error, (as I credibly suppose), that when other later bishops of the like name have devised these ceremonial inventions, the vulgar opinion of men hath transferred them to the first primitive fathers, although being of another time, yet bearing the same name with the true inventors thereof. But of Calixtus enough; who, as Damasus saith, in the days of this Alexander Severus died a martyr. Vincentius affirmeth, that he was tied to a great stone, and so out of a window was thrown into a ditch. Eusebius, speaking of his death, maketh no mention of his martyrdom, and saith he sat five years, Platina saith six years, Sabellicus giveth him seven years, and so doth Damasus.

After

After Calixtus followed Urbanus, about the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and seven, who in his epistle-decretal (coming out of the same forge) which he wrote in common to all bishops, making no mention of the heavy persecutions of the church, nor ministering any exhortation of comfort or constancy to the brethren, only giveth many strict precepts, for not transporting or alienating the goods of the church, and to pay truly their offerings, which they vow; also to have all common among the clergy. Moreover, about the end of his epistle, he instituteth the confirmation of children after baptism, (which the Papists be wont to take into the number of their seven sacraments), affirming and denouncing more than scripture will bear, that the imposition of the bishop's hand bringeth the Holy Ghost, and that thereby men be made full Christians, &c. But of these decretal-epistles enough is said before, more may be considered of the discreet reader. Marianus Scotus, Sabellicus, Nauclerus, and other late story-writers do hold, as is aforesaid, that he died a martyr in the days of Alexander Severus, after he had governed that seat four years, as Damasus and Platina do witness, as Marianus saith, eight years.

The same Damasus and Platina do testify of him, that he, by his preaching and holiness of life, converted divers Ethnics to the faith. Among whom were Tiburtius, and Valerianus, the husband of Cecilia; which both, being noblemen of Rome, remained constant in the faith unto the end and martyrdom. Of this Cecilia thus it is written, in the martyrology by Ado: That Cecilia the virgin, after she had brought Valerian her husband espoused, and Tiburtius his brother, to the knowledge and faith of Christ, and with her exhortations had made them constant unto martyrdom; after the suffering of them she was also apprehended by Almachius the ruler, and brought to the idols to do sacrifice; which thing when she abhorred to do, she should be presented before the judge to have the condemnation of death. In the mean time, the sergeants and officers which were about her, beholding her comely beauty, and the prudent behaviour in her conversation, began with many persuasions of words to solicit her mind to favour herself, and that

so excellent beauty, and not to cast herself away, &c. But she again so replied to them, with reasons and godly exhortations, that by the grace of Almighty God their hearts began to kindle, and at length to yield to that religion, which before they did persecute. Which thing she perceiving, desired of the judge Almachius a little respite: which being granted, she sendeth for Urbanus the bishop home to her house, to establish and ground them in the faith of Christ: and so were they, with divers others, at the same time baptized, both men and women, to the number (as the story saith) of four hundred persons, among whom was one Gordianus a nobleman. This done, this blessed martyr was brought before the judge, where she was condemned; then after was brought to the house of the judge, where she was inclosed in a hot bath; but she remaining there a whole day and night without any hurt, as in a cold place, was brought out again, and commandment given that in the bath she should be beheaded. The executer is said to have four strokes at her neck; and yet her head being cut off, she (as the story giveth) lived three days after. And so died this holy virgin martyr, whose body in the night-season Urbanus the bishop took and buried among the other bishops. Ado, the compiler of this martyrology, addeth, that this was done in the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. But that cannot be, for so much as Urbanus, by all histories, was long after those emperors, and lived in the days of this Alexander, as is above declared. Antoninus, Bergomensis, Equilinus, with such other writers, set forth this history with many strange miracles wrought by the said Cecilia, in converting her husband Valerianus and his brother, in shewing them the angel which was the keeper of her virginity, and of the angel putting on crowns upon their heads. But as touching these miracles, as I do not dispute whether they be true or fabulous, so because they have no ground upon any ancient or grave authors, but are taken out of certain new legends, I do therefore refer them thither from whence they came.

Under the same Alexander divers other there be, whom Bergomensis mentioned to have suffered martyrdom, as one Agapetus of the age of fifteen years, who being apprehend-  
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ed and condemned at Prenest in Italy, because he would not sacrifice to idols, was assailed with sundry torments; first with whips-scourged, then hanged up by the feet, after having hot water poured upon him, at the last cast to the wild beasts: with all which torments when he could not be hurt, finally with sword was beheaded. The executer of these punishments (as by Henricus Erford may be gathered) was one Antiochus; who, in the executing of the foresaid torments, suddenly fell down from his judicial seat, crying out, that all his inward bowels burned within him, and so gave up the breath. *Henricus de Erfordia, lib. 6. cap. 29.*

Also with the same Agapetus is numbered Calepodius, a minister of Rome, whose body first was drawn through the city of Rome, and after cast into Tiber. *Bergo. Ibidem.*

Then followeth Pammachius a senator of Rome, with his wife and children, and others, both men and women, to the number of forty and two.

*Item,* Another noble senator of Rome, named Simplicius, all which together in one day had their heads smitten off, and their heads after hanged up in divers gates of the city for a terror of others, that none should profess the name of Christ.

Besides these suffered also Quiritius a nobleman of Rome, who, with his mother Julia, and a great number more, were put likewise to death.

Also Tiberius and Valerianus, citizens of Rome, and brethren, suffered (as Bergomensis saith) the same time, who, first being bruised and broken with bats, after were beheaded.

Also Vincentius, Bergomensis, and Erfordiensis, make mention of Martina, a Christian virgin, which, after divers bitter punishments, being constant in her faith, suffered in like manner by the sword.

Albeit as touching the time of these forenamed martyrs, as I find them not in older writers; so do I suppose them to suffer under Maximinus or Decius, rather than under Alexander.

## The sixth Persecution.

**A**fter the death of Alexander the emperor, who, with his mother Mammea, (as is said), was murdered in Germany, followed Maximinus, chosen by the will of the soldiers, rather than by the authority of the senate, about the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and seven; who, for the hatred he had to the house of Alexander, (as Eusebius recordeth), raised up the sixth persecution against the Christians, especially against the teachers and leaders of the church, thinking thereby the sooner to vanquish the rest, if the captains of them were removed out of the way. Whereby I suppose the martyrdom of Urbanus the bishop, and of the rest above specified, to have happened rather under the tyranny of this Maximinus than under Alexander. In the time of this persecution Origen wrote his book *De martyrio*; which book, if it were extant, would give us some knowledge, I doubt not, of such as in this persecution did suffer, which now lie in silence unknown; and no doubt but a great number they were, and more should have been, had not the provident mercy of God shortened his days, and bridled his tyranny, for he reigned but three years. After whom succeeded Gordianus, in the year of our Lord two hundred and forty, a man no less studious for the utility of the commonwealth, than mild and gentle to the Christians. This Gordianus, after he had governed with much peace and tranquillity the monarchy of Rome the space of six years, was slain of Philip, emperor after him.

In the days of these emperors above recited was Pontianus bishop of Rome, who succeeded next after Urbanus above rehearsed, about the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and six, in the twelfth year of Alexander, as Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 28.* noteth, declaring him to sit six years. Contrary, Damasus and Platina write, that he was bishop nine years and a half; and that in the time of Alexander he, with Philippus his priest, was banished into Sardinia,

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and there died. But it seemeth more credible, that he was banished rather under Maximinus, and died in the beginning of the reign of Gordianus. In his epistles-decretal (which seem likewise to be feigned) he appeareth very devout, after the common example of other bishops, to uphold the dignity of priests, and of clergymen, saying, That God hath them so familiar with him, that by them he accepteth the offerings and oblations of others, and forgiveth their sins, and reconcileth them unto him: also, That they do make the body of the Lord with their own mouth, and give it to others, &c. Which doctrine how it standeth with the testament of God, and glory of Christ, let the reader use his own judgment.

Other notable fathers also in the same time were raised up in the church, as Philetus bishop of Antioch, which succeeded after Asclepiades afore mentioned, in the year of our Lord two hundred and twenty, and after him Zebennus bishop of the same place, in the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and one.

To these also may be added Ammonius, the schoolmaster of Origen, as Suidas supposeth, also the kinsmen of Porphyry, the great enemy of Christ: notwithstanding, this Ammonius, endued with better grace, as he left divers books in defence of Christ's religion, so did he constantly persevere (as Eusebius reporteth) in the doctrine of Christ, which he had in the beginning received, who was about the days of Alexander.

Julius Africanus also, about the time of Gordianus afore said, is numbered among the old and ancient writers; of whom Nicephorus writeth, that he was the scholar of Origen, and a great writer of histories of that time.

Unto these doctors and confessors may be adjoined the story of Natalius, mentioned in the first book of Eusebius, cap. 28. This Natalius had suffered persecution before like a constant confessor, and was seduced and persuaded by Asclepiodotus and Theodorus, (which were the disciples of Theodocus), to take upon him to be bishop of their sect, promising to give him every month an hundred and fifty pieces of silver: and so he joining himself to them, was admonished by vision and revelation from the Lord;  
for



for such was the great mercy of God, and of our Lord Christ Jesus, that he would not have his martyr, which had suffered so much for his name before, now to perish out of his church. For the which cause, (saith Eusebius), God, by certain visions, did admonish him; but he not taking great heed thereunto, being blinded partly with lucre, partly with honour, was at length all the night long scourged of the angels, insomuch that he being made thereby very sore, and early on the morrow putting on sackcloth with much weeping and lamentation went to Zephirinus the bishop above mentioned, where he falling down before him, and all the Christian congregation, shewed them the stripes of his body, and prayed them for the mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again, from which he had sequestered himself before, and so was admitted according as he desired.

After the decease of Pontianus bishop of Rome afore mentioned, succeeded next in that place Anterius; of whom Isuardis writeth, that Pontianus departing away did substitute him in his room; but Eusebius writeth, that he succeeded immediately after him. Damasus saith, that because he caused the acts and deaths of the martyrs to be written, therefore he was put to martyrdom himself by Maximinus the judge. Concerning the time of this bishop our writers do greatly jar. Eusebius and Marianus Scotus affirm, that he was bishop but one month; Sabellicus saith that not to be so. Damasus assigneth to him twelve years and one month. Volateranus, Bergomensis, and Henricus Erford, give to him three years and one month. Naclerus writeth, that he sat one year and one month. All which are so far discrepant one from another, that which of them most agreeth with truth, it lieth in doubt. Next to this bishop was Fabianus, of whom more is to be said hereafter.

Of Hippolitus also both Eusebius and Hieronymus maketh mention, that he was a bishop; but where, they make no relation. And likewise doth Theodoretus witness him to be a bishop, and also a martyr, but naming no place. Gelatius *contra* Eutichen saith, he died a martyr, and that he was bishop of an head-city in Arabia. Nice-

and there died. But it seemeth more credible, that he was banished rather under Maximinus, and died in the beginning of the reign of Gordianus. In his epistles-decretal (which seem likewise to be feigned) he appeareth very devout, after the common example of other bishops, to uphold the dignity of priests, and of clergymen, saying, That God hath them so familiar with him, that by them he accepteth the offerings and oblations of others, and forgiveth their sins, and reconcileth them unto him: also, That they do make the body of the Lord with their own mouth, and give it to others, &c. Which doctrine how it standeth with the testament of God, and glory of Christ, let the reader use his own judgment.

Other notable fathers also in the same time were raised up in the church, as Philetus bishop of Antioch, which succeeded after Asclepiades afore mentioned, in the year of our Lord two hundred and twenty, and after him Zebennus bishop of the same place, in the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and one.

To these also may be added Ammonius, the schoolmaster of Origen, as Suidas supposeth, also the kinsmen of Porphyry, the great enemy of Christ: notwithstanding, this Ammonius, endued with better grace, as he left divers books in defence of Christ's religion, so did he constantly persevere (as Eusebius reporteth) in the doctrine of Christ, which he had in the beginning received, who was about the days of Alexander.

Julius Africanus also, about the time of Gordianus afore said, is numbered among the old and ancient writers; of whom Nicephorus writeth, that he was the scholar of Origen, and a great writer of histories of that time.

Unto these doctors and confessors may be adjoined the story of Natalius, mentioned in the first book of Eusebius, cap. 28. This Natalius had suffered persecution before like a constant confessor, and was seduced and persuaded by Asclepiodotus and Theodorus, (which were the disciples of Theodocus); to take upon him to be bishop of their sect, promising to give him every month an hundred and fifty pieces of silver: and so he joining himself to them, was admonished by vision and revelation from the Lord;

for

for such was the great mercy of God, and of our Lord Christ Jesus, that he would not have his martyr, which had suffered so much for his name before, now to perish out of his church. For the which cause, (saith Eusebius), God, by certain visions, did admonish him; but he not taking great heed thereunto, being blinded partly with lucre, partly with honour, was at length all the night long scourged of the angels, insomuch that he being made thereby very sore, and early on the morrow putting on sackcloth with much weeping and lamentation went to Zephyrinus the bishop above mentioned, where he falling down before him, and all the Christian congregation, shewed them the stripes of his body, and prayed them for the mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again, from which he had sequestered himself before, and so was admitted according as he desired.

After the decease of Pontianus bishop of Rome afore mentioned, succeeded next in that place Anterius; of whom Isuardis writeth, that Pontianus departing away did substitute him in his room; but Eusebius writeth, that he succeeded immediately after him. Damasus saith, that because he caused the acts and deaths of the martyrs to be written, therefore he was put to martyrdom himself by Maximinus the judge. Concerning the time of this bishop our writers do greatly jar. Eusebius and Marianus Scotus affirm, that he was bishop but one month; Sabellicus saith that not to be so. Damasus assigneth to him twelve years and one month. Volateranus, Bergomensis, and Henricus Erford, give to him three years and one month. Naucleus writeth, that he sat one year and one month. All which are so far discrepant one from another, that which of them most agreeth with truth, it lieth in doubt. Next to this bishop was Fabianus, of whom more is to be said hereafter.

Of Hippolitus also both Eusebius and Hieronymus maketh mention, that he was a bishop; but where, they make no relation. And likewise doth Theodoretus witness him to be a bishop, and also a martyr, but naming no place. Gelatius *contra* Eutichen saith, he died a martyr, and that he was bishop of an head-city in Arabia. Nice-



phorus writeth, that he was bishop of Ostia, a port-town near to Rome. Certain it is, he was a great writer, and left many works in the church, which Eusebius and Hierome do recite. By the supputation of Eusebius, he was about the year of our Lord two hundred and thirty.

Prudentius in his *Peristiphanon*, making mention of great heaps of martyrs buried by threescore together, speaketh also of Hippolitus, and saith, that he was drawn with wild horses through fields, dales, and bushes, and describeth thereof a pitiful story.

After the emperor Gordianus, the empire fell to Philippus, who with Philip his son governed the space of seven years, in the year of our Lord two hundred forty and six. This Philippus; with his son and all his family, was christened and converted by Fabianus and Origen, who by letters exhorted him and Severa his wife to be baptized, being the first of all the emperors that brought in Christianity into the imperial seat. Howsoever Pomponius Letus reporteth him to be a dissembling prince, this is certain, that for his Christianity he, with his son, was slain of Decius, one of his captains. Sabellicus Bergomensis, lib. 8. sheweth this hatred of Decius against Philippus to be conceived, for that the emperor Philip, both the father and the son, had committed their treasures unto Fabianus then bishop of Rome.

### The seventh Persecution.

**T**HUS Philippus being slain, after him Decius invaded the crown about the year of our Lord two hundred and fifty, by whom was moved a terrible persecution against the Christians, which Orosius noteth to be the seventh persecution. The first occasion of this hatred and persecution of this tyrant, conceived against the Christians, was chiefly (as is before touched) because of the treasures of the emperor which were committed to Fabianus the bishop.

This Fabianus first being a married man, (as Platina writeth), was made bishop of Rome after Anterius above mentioned, by the miraculous appointment of God; which Eusebius

sebius doth thus describe in his sixth book. When the brethren, (saith he), were together in the congregation about the election of their bishop, and had purposed among themselves upon the nomination of some noble and worthy personage of Rome, it chanced that Fabianus among others was there present, who of late before was newly come out of the country to inhabit in the city. This Fabianus (as is said) thinking nothing less then of any such matter, there suddenly cometh a dove flying from above, and sitteth upon his head, whereupon all the congregation being moved, with one mind and one voice, to choose him for their bishop, in the which function he remained the space of thirteen years, as Eusebius writeth; Damasus, Marianus, and Sabellicus say fourteen years unto the time of Decius: who, whether for that Philippus had committed to him his treasures, or whether for the hatred he bare to Philippus, in the beginning of his reign caused him to be put to death, sending out moreover his proclamation into all quarters, that all which professed the name of Christ should be slain.

To this Fabianus be ascribed certain ordinances, as of consecrating new oil once every year, and burning the old, of accusations against bishops, of appealing to the see apostolic, of not marrying within the fifth degree, of communicating thrice a year, of offering every Sunday, with such other things more in his three epistles-decretal: the which epistles, as by divers other evidences may be supposed to be untruly named upon him, giving no signification of any matter agreeing to that time; so do I find the most part of the third epistle word for word standing in the epistle of Sixtus the third, which followed almost two hundred years after him; beside the unseemly doctrine also in the end of the said epistles contained, where he, contrary to the tenor of the gospel, applieth remission of sins (only due to the blood of Christ) unto the offerings of bread and wine by men and women every Sunday in the church.

To this Fabianus wrote Origen *De orthodoxia suæ fidei*, that is, of the righteousness of his faith; whereby is to be understood, that he continued to the time of Decius; some say also to the time of Gallus. Of this Origen partly mention

tion is touched before, declaring how bold and fervent he was in the days of Severus, in assisting, comforting, exhorting, and kissing the martyrs that were imprisoned and suffered for the name of Christ, with such danger of his own life, that had it not been the singular protection of God, he had been stoned to death many times of the Heathen multitude. Such great concourse of men and women was daily at his house to be catechised and instructed in the Christian faith by him, that soldiers were hired of purpose to defend the place where he taught them. Again, such search sometime was set for him, that scarce any shifting of place or country could cover him. In whose laborious travels and affairs of the church, in teaching, writing, confuting, exhorting, and expounding, he continued about the space of fifty-two years, unto the time of Decius and Gallus. Divers and great persecutions he sustained, but especially under Decius, as testifieth Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 39.* declaring, that for the doctrine of Christ, he sustained bands and torments in his body, rackings with bars of iron, dungeons, besides terrible threats of death and burning. All this he suffered in the persecution of Decius, as Eusebius recordeth of him, and maketh no relation of any further matter. But Suidas and Nicephorus following the same, saith further concerning him, that the said Origen, after divers and sundry other torments, which he manfully and constantly suffered for Christ, at length was brought to an altar, where a foul filthy Ethiop was appointed to be, and there this option or choice was offered unto him, whether he would sacrifice to the idols, or have his body polluted with that foul and ugly Ethiop. Then Origen, (saith he), who with a philosophical mind ever kept his chastity undefiled, much abhorring that filthy villany to be done to his body, condescended to their request: whereupon the judge putting incense in his hand, caused him to set it to the fire upon the altar: for the which impiety he afterward was excommunicated of the church. Epiphanius writeth, that he being urged to sacrifice to idols, and taking the boughs in his hand, wherewith the Heathen were wont to honour their gods, called upon the Christians to carry them in the honour of Christ. The which fact the church of Alexandria

misliking,



misliking, removed him from their communion: whereupon Origen, driven away with shame and sorrow out of Alexandria, went into Jewry, where being in Jerusalem among the congregation, and there requested of the priests and ministers (he being also a priest) to make some exhortation in the church, he refused a great while to do. At length, by importunate petition being constrained thereunto, he rose up, and turning the book, as though he would have expounded some place of the scripture, he only read the verse of the fiftieth psalm; *But God said to the sinner, Why dost thou preach my justifications? and why dost thou take my testament in thy mouth?* &c. Which verse being read, he shut the book, and sat down weeping and wailing, the whole congregation also weeping and lamenting with him. *Suid. Niceph.* More what became of Origen it is not found in history, but only that Suidas addeth, he died and was buried at Tyrus. Eusebius affirmeth, that he departed under the emperor Gallus, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and five; and the seventieth year of his age, in great misery (as appeareth) and poverty.

In this Origen divers blemishes of doctrine be noted, whereupon Hierome sometimes doth inveigh against him; albeit in some places again he doth extol and commend him for his excellent learning, as in his apology against Rufinus, and in his epistle to Pammachius and Ocean, where he praiseth Origen, although not for the perfection of his faith and doctrine, nor for an apostle, yet for an excellent interpreter, for his wit, and for a philosopher: and yet in his prologue upon the homilies of Origen on Ezekiel, he calleth him another master of the churches after the apostles. And in another preface upon his questions upon Genesis, he wisheth to himself the knowledge of the scriptures which Origen had, also with the envy of his name. Athanasius moreover calleth him singular and laborious, and useth also his testimonies against the Arians. *Socrates, lib. 6. cap. 13.*

After Origen, the congrue order of history requireth next to speak of Heraclas his usher; a man singularly commended for his knowledge, not only in philosophy, but also in such faculties as to a Christian divine do appertain. This  
great

great towardness of wit and learning when Origen perceived in him, he appointed him above all others to be his usher or under-teacher, to help in his school or university of Alexandria, in the reign of Antoninus Caracalla son of Severus; and after, in the tenth year of Alexander, Origen departing unto Cesarea, he succeeded in his room to govern the school in Alexandria. Further, also in the time of Gordianus, after the decease of Demetrius bishop of Alexandria, this Heraclas succeeded to be bishop of the said city. *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 29.* In the which function he ministered the term of sixteen years. *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 35.* Of this Heraclas writeth Origen himself, that he, although being priest, yet ceased not to read over and peruse the books of the Gentiles, to the intent he might the better out of their own books confute their error, &c.

After Heraclas succeeded Dionysius Alexandrinus in the bishoprick of Alexandria, like as he succeeded him in the school before; which Dionysius also writeth of the same Heraclas unto Philemon a priest of Rome, thus saying: *Hunc ego canonem & typum a beato Heracla papa nostro accepi, &c.*; that is, This canon and type I received of blessed Heraclas, our Pope, &c. This Heraclas was no martyr, which died three years before Decius, about the year of our Lord two hundred and fifty. After whom succeeded next in the same seat of Alexandria Dionysius Alexandrinus, who also suffered much under the tyranny of Decius, as hereafter shall be shewed, (Christ willing), when we come to the time of Valerian.

Nicephorus, *lib. 1. cap. 29.* and others, which write of this persecution under Decius, declare the horribleness thereof to be so great, and so innumerable martyrs to suffer in the same, that he saith, it is as easy to number the sand of the sea, as to recite the particular names of them whom this persecution did devour. In the which persecution the chiefest doers and tormentors under the emperor appear in the history of Vincentius to be these: Optimus the under-consul, Secundianus, Verianus, and Marcellianus, &c. Although therefore it be hard here to infer all and singular persons in order that died in this persecution, yet such as remain

remain most notable in stories, I will briefly touch, by the grace of him for whose cause they suffered.

In the former tractation of the first persecution, mention was made before of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and of his troubles suffered under Severus, and how afterward, by the miracle of God, he was appointed bishop of Jerusalem, where he continued a very aged man, above the term of forty years governor of that church, till the time of the first year of Decius; at what time he being brought from Jerusalem to Cesarea into the judgment place, after a constant and evident confession of his faith made before the judge, was committed unto prison, and there finished his life, as testifieth Dionysius Alexandrinus in the sixth book of Eusebius, *cap. 41.* After whom succeeded in that seat Mezabanes, the thirty and sixth bishop of that city after James the apostle.

Mention was made also before of Asclepiades, bishop of Antioch, who succeeded after Serapion, and in the persecution of Severus did likewise persevere a constant confessor, and, as Vincentius testifieth in his eleventh book, *cap. 52.* suffered martyrdom at last under this Decius. But this computation of Vincentius can in no wise agree with the truth of time; for so much as by probable writers, as Zonaras, Nicephorus, and others, the said Asclepiades after Serapion entered the bishop's seat of Antioch, in the year of our Lord two hundred and fourteen, and sat seven years before the time of Gordianus; after whom succeeded Philetus in the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and one, governing the function twelve years; and after him Zibinus followed in the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and two, and so after him Babylas; which Babylas, if he died in this persecution of Decius, then could not Asclepiades also suffer in the same time, who died so long before him, as is declared.

Of this Babylas, bishop of Antioch, Eusebius and Zonaras record, that under Decius he died in prison, as did Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, above rehearsed.

We read in a certain treatise of Chrysostom, entitled, *Contra Gentiles*, a notable and long history of one Babylas a martyr, who about these times was put to death for re-



sisting a certain emperor, not suffering him to enter into the temple of the Christians after a cruel murder committed; the story of which murder is this. There was a certain emperor, who, upon conclusion of peace made with a certain nation, had received for hostage or surety of peace the son of the king, being of young and tender age, with conditions upon the same, that neither he should be molested of them, nor that they should ever be vexed of him. Upon this the king's son was delivered, not without great care and fear of the father, unto the emperor, whom the cruel emperor, contrary to promise, caused in short time without all just cause to be slain. This fact so horrible being committed, the tyrant with all haste would enter into the temple of the Christians, where Babylas being bishop or minister withstood him, that he should not into that place approach. The emperor therewith not a little incensed, in great rage had him forthwith to be laid in prison with as many irons as he could bear, and from thence shortly after to be brought forth to death and execution. Babylas, going constantly and boldly to his martyrdom, desired after his death to be buried with his irons and bands; and so he was. The story proceedeth moreover, and saith, That in continuance of time in the reign of Constantinus, Gallus, then made the overseer of the East parts, caused his body to be translated into the suburbs of Antioch, called Daphnes, where was a temple of Apollo, famous with devilish oracles and answers given by that idol, or by the devil rather in that place. In the which temple, after the bringing of the body of Babylas, the idol ceased to give any more oracles, saying, That for the body of Babylas he could give no more answers, and complaining that that place was wont to be consecrated unto him, but now it was full of dead mens bodies. And thus the oracles there ceased for that time till the coming of Julianus; who inquiring out the cause why the oracles ceased, caused the bones of the holy martyr to be removed again from thence by the Christians, whom he then called Galileans. They coming in a great multitude, both men, maidens, and children, to the tomb of Babylas, transported his bones according to the commandment of the emperor, singing by the way

way as they went the verse of the psalm in words as followeth: *Confounded be all that worship images, and all that glory in idols, &c.* Which coming to the emperor's ear, set him in great rage against the Christians, stirring up persecution against them. Albeit Zonaras declareth the cause something otherwise, saying, That so soon as the body of him and other martyrs were removed away, incontinent the temple of the idol, with the image, in the night was consumed with fire: for the which cause (saith Zonaras) Julian, stirred up with anger, persecuted the Christians, as shall be shewed (Christ willing) in his order and place hereafter.

And thus much of Babylas, which whether it was the same Babylas bishop then of Antioch, or another of the same name, it appeareth not by Chrysostom, which neither maketh mention of the emperor's name, nor of the place where this Babylas was bishop. Again, the stopping of the emperor out of the church importeth as much as that emperor to have been a Christian; for otherwise if he had come in as an Heathen, and as a persecutor, it was not then the manner of Christian bishops violently to withstand the emperors, or to stop them out. Over and beside the testimony of Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 39.* Zonaras doth witness contrary in his sixth book, that this Babylas, which was then bishop of Antioch after Zebinus, was not put to death by the tormentors, but died in prison: wherefore it is not impossible but this Babylas, and this emperor which Chrysostom speaketh of, may be another Babylas than that which suffered under Decius. Nicephorus, *lib. 5. cap. 25.* maketh mention of another Babylas beside this, that suffered under Decius, which was bishop of Nicomedia.

In the forenamed city of Antioch, Vincentius, *lib. 11. cap. 52.* speaketh of forty virgins martyrs, which suffered in this persecution of Decius.

In the country of Phrygia, and in the town of Lampsar, the same Vincentius also speaketh of one Peter which there was apprehended, and suffered bitter torments for Christ's name under Optimus the Proconsul; and in Throada likewise of other martyrs that there suffered, whose names were Andrew, Paul, Nicomachus, and Dionysia a virgin, *lib. 11. cap. 46.*

Also in Babylon (saith he) divers Christian confessors were found of Decius, which were led away into Spain, there to be executed, *lib. eodem, cap. 43.*

In the country of Cappadocia, at the city of Cesarea, in like manner of the said author is testified, that Germanus, Theophilus, Cesarius, and Vitalis, suffered martyrdom for Christ. *Eodem, cap. 52.* And in the same book mention is also made of Polychronius, bishop of Babylon, *cap. 89.* and in Pamphylia of Nestor, there bishop, that died martyr, *cap. 52.*

At Perside, in the town of Cardala, Olympiades and Maximus; in Tyrus also Anatolia virgin, and Audar, gave their lives likewise to death for the testimony of Christ's name.

Eusebius, moreover, *lib. 6. cap. 40. 41. 42.* reciteth out of the epistles of Dionysius Alexandrinus, divers that suffered diversly at Alexandria; the which places of Dionysius, as they be cited in Eusebius, I thought here good, for the ancientness of the author, to insert and notify in his own words, and in our language, as he wrote them to Fabius bishop of Antioch, as followeth.

This persecution (saith he) began not with the proclamation set forth by the emperor, but began a whole year before, by the occasion and means of a wicked person, a soothsayer, and a follower of wicked arts; who, coming to our city here, stirred up the multitude of the Heathen against us, and incited them to maintain their own old superstition and gentility of their country; whereby they being set agog, and obtaining full power to prosecute their wicked purpose, so thought, and no less declared, all their piety and religion to consist only in the idolatrous worship of devils, and in our destruction. And first flying upon a certain priest of ours, named Metra, they apprehended him, and brought him forth to make him speak after their wicked blasphemy; which when he would not do, they laid upon him with staves and clubs, and with sharp reeds pricked his face and eyes, and afterward bringing him out into the suburbs, there they stoned him to death. Then they took a faithful woman, called Quinta, and brought her to the temple of their idols, to compel her to worship with them:

which



which when she refused to do, and abhorred their idols, they bound her feet, and drew her through the whole street of the city upon the hard stones, and so dashing her against millstones, and scourging her with whips, brought her to the same place of the suburbs, as they did the other before, where she likewise ended her life. This done, in a great outrage, and with a multitude running together, they burst into houses of the religious and godly Christians, spoiling, sacking, and carrying away all that they could find of any price. The rest of things, such as were of less value and of wood, they brought into the open market, and set them on fire. In the mean time the brethren voided aside, and withdrew themselves, taking patiently, and no less joyfully, the spoiling of their goods, than did they of whom St Paul doth testify: neither do I know any of them all (one only excepted) apprehended of them, which revolting from his profession denied the Lord yet to this present day.

Amongst the rest that there were taken, there was a certain virgin well stricken in years, named Apollinia, whom they brought forth, and dashing all her teeth out of her jaws, made a great fire before the city, threatening to cast her into the same, unless she would blaspheme with them and deny Christ: whereat she staying a little with herself, as one that would take a pause, suddenly leaped into the midst of the fire, and there was burned.

There was also one Serapion, whom they took in his own house, and after they had assailed him with sundry kinds of torments, and had broken almost all the joints of his body, they cast him down from an upper loft, and so did he complete his martyrdom. Thus was there no way, neither privy nor public, nor corner nor alley, left for us, neither by day nor by night, to escape, all the people making an outcry against us, that unless we uttered words of blasphemy, we should be drawn to the fire and burned. And this outrageous tumult endured a certain space, but at length, as the Lord would, the miserable wretches fell at dissention among themselves, which turned the cruelty they exercised against us upon their own heads. And so had we a little breathing-time for a season, while the fury of the Heathen people by this occasion assuaged.

Shortly

Shortly then after this, word was brought unto us that the state of the empire, which before was something favourable to us, was altered and changed against us, putting us in great fear. And consequently upon the same followed the edict of the emperor so terrible and cruel, that, according to the forewarning of the Lord, the elect (if it had been possible) might have been thereby subverted. Upon that edict such fear came over us all, that many there were, especially of the richer sort, of whom some for fear came running, some were led by the occasion of time, some were drawn by their neighbours, being cited by name, to those impure and idolatrous sacrifices. Other some came trembling and shaking, as men not which should do sacrifice, but which should be sacrificed themselves, the multitude laughing them to scorn. Some again came boldly to the altars, declaring themselves never to have been of that profession, of whom it is said, that hardly they shall be saved. Of the residue, some followed one part, some another, some ran away, some were taken; of whom certain continued to bands and torments constant; others again, after long imprisonment, before they should come before the judge, renounced their faith. Some also, after they suffered torments, yet after revolted. But others being as strong as blessed, and valiant pillars of the Lord, fortified with constancy, agreeing to their faith, were made faithful martyrs of the kingdom of God.

Of whom the first was Julianus, a man diseased with the gout, and not able to go, being carried of two men, of whom the one quickly denied; the other, Cronion, surnamed Eunus, with the foresaid Julianus the old man, confessing the Lord with a perfect faith, were laid upon camels, and there scourged, at length cast into the fire, and with great constancy were so consumed.

As these afore said were going to their martyrdom, there was a certain soldier, who in their defence took part against them that railed upon them. For the which cause the people crying out against him, he also was apprehended, and being constant in his profession, was forthwith beheaded.

Likewise one Maçar, a man born in Libya, being admonished

nished and exhorted of the judge to deny his faith, and not agreeing to his persuasions, was burned alive.

After these suffered Epimachus, and one Alexander, who being long detained in prison, and in bands, after innumerable pains and torments with razors and scourges, were also cast into the burning fire, with four other women with them, which all there ended their martyrdom.

Also Ammonarion, an holy virgin, whom the cruel judge had long and bitterly tormented, for that she promising the judge before, that for no punishment she would yield to his request, and constantly performing the same, suffered likewise martyrdom, with two other women, of whom there was an aged matron, named Mercuria, the other was called Dionysia, being a mother of many fair children, whom yet notwithstanding she loved not above the Lord. These, after they could not be overcome by any torments of the cruel judge, but he rather ashamed and confounded to be overcome of silly women, at length being past feeling of all torments, were slain with the sword; first Ammonarion, like a valiant captain, suffering before them.

Heron, Ater, and Isidorus, Egyptians, and with them Dioscorus also, a child of fifteen years, were crowned with the same crown of martyrdom. And first the judge began with the child, thinking him more easy to be won with words to entice him, than with torments to constrain him: but he persisted immoveable, giving neither place to persuasions nor punishments. The rest, after he had grievously tormented them, being constant in their profession, he committed to the fire. The judge, greatly marvelling at Dioscorus for his wise answers and grave constancy, dismissed him, sparing (as he said) his age to a longer respite; which Dioscorus is yet also with us at this present, waiting for a long trial.

Nemesion, being also an Egyptian, first was accused for a companion of thieves; but being purged thereof before the centurion, was then accused of Christianity, and for that cause being in bands, was brought to the president; who most unrighteously tormenting and scourging him double to all other thieves and felons, at length among the thieves burned him to death, making him a blessed martyr.

There



There were standing before the tribunal-seat, certain of the warriours or knights, whose names were Ammon, Zenon, Ptolomeus, Ingenuus, and with them a certain aged man called Theophilus; who standing by, at what time a certain Christian man was before the judge examined, and there seeing him for fear ready to decline and fall away, did burst almost for sorrow within themselves, making signs to him with their hands, and all gestures of their body, to be constant. This being noted of all the standers by, they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they, preventing the matter, pressed up of their own accord before to the bench of the judge, professing themselves to be Christians. Insomuch that both the president with the benchers, were all astonied, the Christians, which were judged, more imboldened to suffer, and the judges thereby terrified. This done, they departed away from the place, glad and rejoicing for the testimony that they had given of their faith. Many other besides, were in other cities and towns rent and torn asunder by the Heathen, among whom one I will speak of for cause worthy of memory.

Ischirion, one that was in service with a certain nobleman, was commanded of his master to make sacrifice, who, for not obeying, was therefore rebuked; after persisting in the same, was grievously threatened with sharp and menacing words. At last his master, when he could not prevail against him, taking a stake or pike in his hands, ran him through in the body and slew him.

What shall I speak of the multitude of them, which wandering in deserts and mountains, were consumed with hunger, thirst, cold, sickness, thieves, or wild beasts, of whose blessed victory they which be alive are yet witnesses? In the number of whom, one I will speak of, among divers others, named Cheremon, bishop of the city called Nilus, an aged man. He, with his wife, flying to the mountain of Arabia, never returned again, nor ever could be seen after. And though they were sought for diligently by their brethren, yet neither they nor their bodies were found. Many others there were, which flying to these mountains of Arabia were taken of the barbarous Arabians; of whom some with much money could scarce be ransomed; some were  
never

never heard of yet to this present day. Thus much out of the epistles of Dionysius in *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 40. 41. 42. &c.*

Moreover, the foresaid Dionysius in another place, writing to Germanus of his own dangers, and of others, sustained in this persecution, and before this persecution of Decius, thus inferreth as followeth : I, (saith he), behold, before the sight of God, I lie not, and he knoweth I lie not, how that I, having no regard of mine own life, and not without the motion of God, did fly and avoid the danger of this persecution. Yea, and also before that this persecution of Decius did rage against us, Sabinus the same hour sent a farmer to seek me, at what time I remaining at home waited three days for his coming. But he searching narrowly for me by all ways, fields, floods, and corners, where he thought I might best have hid myself, or have passed by, was stricken with such blindness, that he could not find my house, thinking with himself nothing less than that I would abide at home in such and so dangerous persecution. Thus these three days being past, upon the fourth day the Lord God so willing and commanding me to fly, and also marvellously opening to me the way, I with my \* children and many \* *Ergo*, Bishops other brethren went out together. And then had wives this not to come of myself, but to be the and children. work of God's providence, the sequel of those things declared, wherein afterward I was not unprofitable peradventure to some, &c.

Again, in another place shortly after, the foresaid Dionysius, proceeding in the narration of himself, thus inferreth : Then I coming to Jerusalem with them which were with me, was brought by soldiers unto Taposixis, whereas Timotheus (by the providence of God) neither was present, nor yet taken ; who then returning home, found his house desert, and officers watching about the same, and us within taken, &c. And again shortly after it followeth ; And to see (saith he) the admirable disposing of God his works ; as Timotheus was thus flying with much haste and great fear, a certain man, as happened, a dweller near by, met him by the way, and asked, whither he went so ha-

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stily ?

stily? To whom Timotheus answering, declared all the matter simply as it was. Which done, the man proceedeth on his journey, whither he was purposed to go, which was to a marriage; the manner of which marriages then was to sit up all the night long, feasting and drinking. Thus, as he was come, sitting with them at the feast, he telleth his companions what was done, and what he heard by the way. This was no sooner told, but all they forthwith upon a head, as stricken with a sudden fury, rushing out together made toward us as fast as they could, with such crying and noise as might seem very terrible. At the first hearing whereof, the soldiers that had us in keeping being afraid, ran away, by reason whereof we were left alone, and found as we were lying upon forms and benches. I then (the Lord knoweth) thinking with myself, that they had been thieves, which came to spoil and rob, being in my couch, lay still in my shirt only as I was, the rest of my garments lying by me I offered to them. They then willed me in all haste to rise and get away; whereby I then perceiving the cause of their coming, cried unto them, desiring that they would suffer us so to do; and if they would do any benefit for me, for so much as I could not escape the hands of them which would pursue me and carry me away, I prayed them that they would prevent them, and cut off my head before. And as I was crying thus unto them, casting myself grovelling upon the pavement, as my companions can testify, who were partakers of all these things, they burst forth violently, taking me by the hands and feet, and carried me out of the doors, and led me away. There followed me Gaius, Faustus, Petrus, Paulus, (who were witnesses of all the same), which brought me also out of the city, and so setting me upon a bare ass, conveyed me away. Thus much writeth Dionysius of himself, the example of whose epistle is cited in the ecclesiastical story of Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 40.* also *lib. 7. cap. 11.*

Nicephorus, *lib. 5. cap. 27.* maketh mention of one named Christophorus, which also suffered in this persecution of Decius. Of which Christophorus, whether the fable riseth of that mighty giant set up in churches, wading



ding through the seas with Christ on his shoulder, and a tree in his hand for a walking staff, &c. it is uncertain. Georgius Wicelius alledgeth out of *Ruggerius Fuldens.* and mentioneth of one Christophorus, born of the nation of Canaanites, which suffered under Decius, being, as he saith, of twelve cubits high. But the rest of the history painted in churches the said Wicelius derideth as fables of Centaurus, or other poetical fictions.

Bergomenfis, *lib.* 8. maketh relation of divers martyred under Decius, as Meniatius which suffered at Florence, of Agatha an holy virgin of Sicile, who is said to suffer divers and bitter torments under Quintilianus the proconsul, with prisonment, with beatings, with famine, with racking, rolled also upon sharp shells and hot coals, having moreover her breasts cut from her body, as Bergomenfis and the martyrology of Ado record. In the which authors, as I deny not but that the rest of the story may be true, so again, concerning the miracles of the aged man appearing to her, and of the young man clothed in a silken vesture, with an hundred young men after him, and of the marble table with the inscription, *Mentem sanctam*, &c. I doubt.

Hard it is to recite all that suffered in this persecution, when as whole multitudes went into wildernesses and mountains, wandering without succour or comfort, some starved with hunger and cold, some with sickness consumed, some devoured of beasts, some with barbarous thieves taken and carried away. Vincentius in his eleventh book, speaking of Asclepiades, writeth also of forty virgins and martyrs, which by fundry kinds of torments were put to death about the same time, in the persecution of this tyrant.

Likewise in the said Vincentius mention is made of Triphon, a man of great holiness, and constant in his suffering, who being brought to the city of Nice, before the president Aquilus, for his constant confession of Christ's name, was afflicted with divers and grievous torments, and at length with the sword put to death.

At what time Decius had erected a temple in the midst of the city of Ephesus, compelling all that were in the city there to sacrifice to the idols, seven Christians were found, whose names were Maximianus, Malchus, Martianus, Dio-

nysius, Joannes, Serapion, and Constantinus, who, refusing the idolatrous worship, were accused for the same unto the emperor to be Christians. Which when they constantly professed and did not deny, notwithstanding, because they were soldiers, retaining to the emperor's service, respite was given them for a certain space, to deliberate with themselves, till the return again of the emperor, which then was going to war. In the mean space, the emperor being departed, they taking council together, went and hid themselves in secret caves of the mount Celius. The emperor returning again, after great inquisition made for them, hearing where they were, caused the mouth of the place where they were to be closed up with heaps of stones, that they, not able to get out, should be famished within. And thus were those good men martyred. The story (if it be true) goeth further, that they, between fear and sorrow, fell asleep, in which sleep they continued the space of certain ages after, till the time of Theodosius the emperor, before they did awake, as reporteth Vincentius, Nicephorus, *lib. 5. cap. 27.* and partly also *Henricus Erfordiens.* But of their awaking, that I refer to them that list to believe it. Certain it is, that at the last day they shall awake indeed without any fable.

Hieronimus, in the life of Paulus the hermit, reciteth a story of a certain soldier, whom when the pretor could not otherwise with torments remove from his Christianity, he devised another way, which was this: he commanded the soldier to be laid upon a soft bed in a pleasant garden among the flourishing lilies and red roses; which done, all others being removed away, and himself there left alone, a beautiful harlot came to him, who embraced him, and with all other incitements of an harlot laboured to provoke him to her naughtiness. But the godly soldier fearing God more than obeying flesh, bit off his own tongue with his teeth, and spit it in the face of the harlot as she was kissing him, and so got he the victory, by the constant grace of the Lord assisting him.

Another like example of singular chastity is written of the virgin Theodora, and another soldier, by *Ambros. lib. 2. de virginibus.* At Antioch, this Theodora refusing to do  
sacrifice

sacrifice to the idols, was condemned by the judge to the stews, and notwithstanding by the singular providence of God was well delivered. For as there was a great company of wanton young men ready at the door to press into the house where she was, one of the brethren named Didymus (as Ado saith) moved with faith and motion of God, putting on a soldier's habit, made himself one of the first that came in, who rounding her in the ear, told her the cause and purpose of his coming, being a Christian as she was: his counsel was, that she should put on the soldier's habit, and so slip away; and he putting on her garments, would there remain to abide their force; and so did, whereby the virgin escaped unknown. Didymus left unto the rage and wondering of the people, being a man instead of a woman, was presented unto the president, unto whom without delay he uttered all the whole matter as it was done, professing him, so as he was, to be a Christian, and thereupon was condemned to suffer. Theodora understanding thereof, and thinking to excuse him by accusing herself, offered herself as the party guilty unto the judge, claiming and requiring the condemnation to light upon her, the other as innocent to be discharged. But the cruel judge, (crueller than Dionysius, which spared Damon and Pithias), neither considering the virtue of the persons, nor the innocency of the cause, unjustly and inhumanly proceeded in execution against them both, who, first having their heads cut off, after were cast into the fire: *Ambros. Ado.* Although what time, or in what persecution these did suffer, in the authors of this narration it doth not appear.

Agathon, a man of arms in the city of Alexandria, for rebuking certain lewd persons scornfully deriding the dead bodies of the Christians, was cried out of and railed on of the people, and afterward accused to the judge, was condemned to lose his head. *Erfordiensis.*

The said Erfordiensis also maketh mention of Paulus, Andreas, whom the proconsul of Troada gave to the people; who being scourged, and after drawn out of the city, were trodden to death with the feet of the people. *Henr. de Erford.*

Among



Among others that suffered under this wicked Decius, Bergomenfis also maketh mention of one Justinus a priest of Rome, and of another Nicostratus a deacon. To these Vincentius also addeth Portius a priest of Rome, whom he reporteth to be the converter of Philip the emperor afore mentioned.

Of Abdon and Sennas we read also in the foresaid Bergomenfis and Vincentius, two noblemen who, because they had buried the Christians, whom Decius had brought from Babylon to Corduba, and there put them to death, were therefore accused to Decius, and brought to Rome; where they, being commanded to sacrifice to dead idols, would not obey; and for the same were given to the wild beasts to be devoured: but when the wild beasts, more gentle than the men, would not touch them, they were at length with the sword beheaded. *Bergom. Vincent. lib. 11. cap. 4.* Albeit to me it seemeth not impossible nor unlike, this Abdon and Sennas to be the same, whom in other stories we find, and before have mentioned to be Ammon and Zenon.

One Secundianus was accused to Valerian, a captain of Decius, to be a Christian; which profession when he stoutly did maintain, he was commanded to prison. By the way as the soldiers were leading him to the goal, Verianus and Marcellianus seeing the matter, cried to the soldiers, asking them whither they drew the innocent? At the which word, when they also confessed themselves to be Christians, they were likewise apprehended, and brought to a city named Centumcellas; where being willed to sacrifice, they did spit upon the idols, and so after sentence and judgment given, first they were beaten with wasters or trunchions, after that were hanged and tormented upon the gibbet, having fire set to their sides. Vincentius addeth, moreover, *lib. 11. cap. 51.* that some of the tormentors falling suddenly dead, other some being taken with wicked spirits, the martyrs with the sword at length were beheaded.

To prosecute in length of history the lives and sufferings of all them which in this terrible persecution were martyred, it were too long, and almost infinite. Briefly therefore to rehearse the names of such as we find alledged  
out

out of a certain brief treatise of Bede, entitled, *De temporibus*, cited by Henricus de Erfordia, it shall be at this time sufficient. Under Decius suffered Hippolitus and Concordia, Hiereneus and Abundus, Victoria a virgin, being noble personages of Antioch; Bellias bishop of the city of Apollonia; Leacus, Tirsus, and Gallinetus, Nazanzo, Triphon, in the city of Egypt called Tamas; Pheleas bishop, Philocomus, with many other in Perside; Philcronius bishop of Babylon, Thesiphon bishop of Pamphylia, Nestor bishop in Corduba, Parmenius priest, with divers more. In the province called Colonia, Circensis, Marianus, and Jacobus. In Africa, Nemesianus, Felix, Regotianus priest, Felicissimus. At Rome, Jovinus, Basileus, also Ruffina and Secunda virgins, Tertullianus, Valerianus, Nemesius, Sempronianus, and Olympius. In Spain, Teragon. At Verona, Zeno bishop. At Cesarea, Marinus and Archemius. In the town of Milain, Privatus bishop, Theodorus, surnamed Gregorius, bishop of Pontus. *Hæc Beda.*

Vincentius, *lib. 11. cap. 52.* maketh mention, citing *ex Hugone*, of certain children suffering martyrdom under the same persecution, in a city of Tuscia, called Aretium, whose names I find not, except they be Pergensius and Laurentius, mentioned in Equilinus, *lib. 5. cap. 80.*

Now that I have recorded of them sufficiently, which under this tempest of Decius constantly gave their lives to martyrdom for the testimony of Christ; it remaineth that a few words also be spoken of such as for fear or frailty in this persecution did shrink and slide from the truth of their confession. In the number of whom first cometh in the remembrance of Serapion, an aged old man. Of whom writeth Dionysius Alexandrinus unto Fabius, declaring that this Serapion was an old man, which lived amongst them a sincere and upright life of long time, but at length fell. This Serapion oft and many times desired to be received again, but no man listened to him, for he had sacrificed before. After this, not long after, he fell into sickness, where he remained three days dumb, and benumbed of all senses. The fourth day following, beginning a little to recover, he called to him his sister's son, and said, How long, how long (my son) do ye hold me here? Make haste, I pray you, that I were absolved.

solved. Call hither some of the ministers to me. And so, saying no more, held his peace as dumb and speechless. The boy ran (it was then night) unto the minister, who, at the same time being sick, could not come with the messenger, but said. For so much as he willed heretofore (as he said) that such as lay a-dying, if they covet to be received and reconciled, and especially if they required it earnestly, should be admitted, whereby with the better hope

and confidence they may depart hence; \* Note here the sacrament to be therefore he gave to the boy a little of the \* eucharist, willing him to crumble called the eucharist, and not it into the cup, and so to drop it into the mouth of the old man. With this the the body of boy returned, bringing with him the holy Christ. As he was now near at

hand, before he had entered in, Serapion, the old man, speaking again, Comest thou, (said he), my son? The priest, quoth the messenger, is sick, and cannot come, but do as he willeth you, and let me go. And the boy immixed the eucharist, and dropt it in softly into the mouth of the old man, who, after he had tasted a little, immediately gave up the ghost, &c. *Hac Dionys. ex Euseb.*

In the city of Troad, as the proconsul was grievously tormenting one Nicomachus, he cried out that he was no Christian, and so was let down again. And after, when he had sacrificed, he was taken eftsoons with a wicked spirit, and so thrown down upon the ground, where he, biting off his tongue with his teeth, so departed. *Henr. de Erford.*

Dionysius in his epistles also writing to Fabius, and lamenting the great terror of this persecution, declareth, how that many worthy and notable Christians, for fear and horror of the great tyranny thereof, did shew themselves feeble and weak men. Of whom some for dread, some of their own accord, others after great torments suffered, yet after revolted from the constancy of their profession. Also St Cyprian, in his treatise *De Lapsis*, reciteth with great sorrow, and testifieth how that a great number at the first threatening of the adversary, neither being compelled nor thrown



thrown down with any violence of the enemy, but of their voluntary weakness fell down themselves. Neither (saith he) tarrying while the judge should put incense in their hands, but before any stroke stricken in the field, turned their backs, and played the cowards; not only coming to their sacrifices, put preventing the same, and pretending to come without compulsion, bringing moreover their infants and children, either put into their hands, or taking them with them of their own accord, and exhorting moreover others to do the like after their example.

Of this weakness and falling, the said author sheweth two causes, either love of their goods and patrimony, or fear of torments; and addeth, moreover, examples of the punishments of them which revolted, affirming that many of them were taken and vexed with wicked spirits; and that one man among others, after his voluntary denial, was suddenly stricken dumb. Again, another after his abjuration, as he should communicate with others, instead of bread received ashes in his hand. *Item*, A certain maiden being taken and vexed with a spirit, did tear her own tongue with her teeth, and tormented with pain in her belly and inward parts, so deceased.

Amongst others of this sort, St Cyprian, *lib. 2. cap. 8.* maketh also mention of one Evaristus a bishop in Africa, who leaving his charge, and making shipwreck of his faith, went wandering about in other countries, forsaking his own flock. In like manner, he maketh also mention of Nicostratus a deacon, who forsaking his deaconship, and taking the goods of the church with him, fled away into other countries, &c. Albeit Bergomensis affirmeth, that this Nicostratus the deacon afterward died a martyr. Thus then, although some did relent, yet a very great number (saith he) there was, whom neither fear could remove, nor pain could overthrow, to cause them to betray their confession, but they stood like glorious martyrs unto the end. *Cyprian. lib. de mortalitate.*

The same Cyprianus also, in another book, *De mortalitate*, reciteth a notable story of one of his own colleagues and fellow-priests, who being oppressed with weakness, and greatly afraid with death drawing at hand, desired leave to

depart, and to be discharged. As he was thus intreating, and almost now dying, there appeared by him a young man, of an honourable and reverend majesty, of a tall stature, and comely behaviour, so bright and clear to behold, that scarce man's carnal eyes were able so to do, which was now ready to depart this world. To whom this young man, speaking with a certain indignation of mind and voice, thus said: *Pati timetis, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis?* "To suffer ye dare not, to go out ye will not, what would ye have me to do unto you?"

Upon the occasion of these and such others, which were a great number, that fell and did renounce, as is aforesaid, in this persecution of Decius, rose up first the quarrel and heresy of Novatus, who in these days made a great disturbance in the church, holding this opinion, that they which once renounced the faith, and for fear of torments had offered incense to the idols, although they repented therefor, yet could not afterward be reconciled, nor admitted to the church of Christ. This Novatus being first priest under Cyprian at Carthage, afterward, by stirring up discord and factions, began to disturb the bishoprick of Cyprian, to appoint there a deacon called Felicissimus, against the bishop's mind or knowledge; also to allure and separate certain of the brethren from the bishop; all which Cyprian, *lib. 2. epist. 8.* doth well declare. After this the said Novatus going to Rome, kept there the like stir with Cornelius, (as the same Cornelius in Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 43.* doth testify), setting himself up as bishop of Rome against Cornelius, which was the lawful bishop of Rome before. The which to bring to pass, he used this practice. First, he had allured to him to be his adherents three or four good men and holy confessors, which had suffered before great torments for their confession, whose names were Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Celerinus. After this he enticed three simple bishops about the coasts of Italy to repair to Rome, under pretence to make an end of certain controversies then in hand. This done, he caused the same, whether by making them drunk, or by other crafty counsel, to lay their hands upon him, and to make him bishop; and so they did. Wherefore the one of those three bishops hardly

was

was received to the communion, by the great intercession of his people; the other two, by discipline of the church, were displaced from their bishopricks, and others possessed with their rooms. Thus then were there two bishops together in one church of Rome, Novatus and Cornelius, which was unseemly, and contrary to the discipline of the church. And hereupon riseth the true cause and meaning of St Cyprian writing in his epistles so much of one bishop, and of the unity to be kept in ecclesiastical regiment, as appeareth, *lib. 4. epist. 2. de simplicit. pralat. Item. lib. 3. epist. 11. &c.* And in like sort writeth also Cornelius himself of one bishop, saying, *Itaque vindex ille evangelii ignoravit unum esse debere episcopum in catholica ecclesia, &c.*; that is, "He knew not that there ought to be one bishop in a catholic church," &c. This by the way, not out of the way I trust, I have touched briefly, to detect or refute the cavilling wresting of the Papists, which falsely apply these places of Cyprian and Cornelius to maintain the Pope's supreme mastership alone, over the whole universal church of Christ in all places; when their meaning is otherwise, how that every one catholic church or diocese ought to have one bishop over it, not that the whole world ought to be subject to the dominion of him only that is bishop of Rome. Now to the story again. Novatus being thus bishop, took not a little upon him, going about by all means to defeat Cornelius, and to allure the people from him. Inasmuch that (as in the foresaid book of Eusebius appeareth) when Novatus came to the distributing of the offerings, and should give every man his part, he compelled the simple persons every man to swear, before they should receive of the benediction, and of the collects or oblations, holding both their hands in his, and holding them so long, speaking these words unto them, (Swear to me by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou wilt not leave me, and go to Cornelius), till that they swearing unto him, instead of Amen, (to be said at the receiving of the \* bread), should answer, I will not return to Cornelius, &c. Where note by the way, that the Latin book of Christoferson's translation, in this place ~~gratily~~ leaveth out the name of bread,

\* Note here the sacrament of the body to be called bread.



This story being written in Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 43.* also contained in Nicephorus, *lib. 6. cap. 3.* although not in the same order of words, yet in effect drawn out of him, doth declare in plain words in both the authors, (whoso will mark the same), that the sacrament of the body of Christ is termed with the plain name of bread, after the consecration.

It followeth more in the story, that Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Celerinus, before mentioned, perceiving at length the crafty dissimulation and arrogancy of Novatus, left him, and with great repentance returned again to the church, and were reconciled to Cornelius, as they themselves writing to Cyprian, and Cyprian likewise writing to them an epistle gratulatory doth declare, *lib. 3. epist. 3.*; and Cornelius also in his epistle to Fabius witnesseth the same. In this epistle the said Cornelius moreover writeth of one Moses a worthy martyr, which once being also a follower of Novatus, after perceiving his wickedness, forsook him, and did excommunicate him. Of him Cyprian also maketh mention, and calleth him a blessed confessor, *lib. 2. epist. 4.* Damasus in his Pontifical saith, that he was apprehended with Maximus and Nicostratus above mentioned, and was put with them in prison, where he ended his life. And thus much of Novatus, against whom (as Eusebius testifieth) a synod was holden at Rome of threescore sundry bishops in the time of Cornelius, and under the reign of Decius, in the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and five; whereby it may be supposed that the heat of the persecution at that time was somewhat calmed.

After Fabianus, (or, as Zonaras calleth him, Flavianus), next succeeded into the bishoprick of Rome Cornelius, whom Cyprian noteth to be a worthy bishop, and for his great virtue and maidenly continency much commendable; chosen to that room not so much by his own consent, as by the full agreement, both of the clergymen, and also of the people. Hierome addeth also, that he was a man of great eloquence: whereby it may appear, those two epistles-decretal, which go in his name, not to be his, both for the rudeness of the barbarous and gross stile, and also for the matter therein contained, nothing tasting of that time,

nor

nor of that age, nor doings then of the church. Whereof in the first he writeth to all ministers and brethren of the church, concerning the lifting up of the bodies and bones of Peter and Paul, *De cathecumbis*, and transposed to Vaticanum, at the instance of a certain devout woman named Lucina, having no great argument or cause to write thereof unto the churches, but only that he in that letter doth desire them to pray unto the Lord, that through the intercession of those apostolical saints, their sins might be forgiven them, &c. In the second epistle written to Ruffus, a bishop of the East church, he decreeth and ordaineth, That no oath ought to be required or exacted of any head or chief bishop, for any cause, or by any power. Also, That no cause of priests or ministers ought to be handled in any strange or foreign court, without his precinct, except only in the court of Rome by appellation: whereby, who seeth not the train of our later bishops, going about craftily to advance the dignity of the court of Rome, under, and by the pretended title of Cornelius, and of ancient bishops? If Cornelius did write any epistles to any indeed, in those so turbulent times of persecution, no doubt but some signification thereof he would have touched in the said his letters, either in ministering consolation to his brethren, or in requiring consolation and prayers of others. Neither is there any doubt, but he would have given some touch also of the matter of Novatus, with whom he had so much to do; as indeed he did: for so we find it recorded both in Eusebius, and in Hierome, that he wrote unto Fabius bishop of Antioch, of the decreements of the council of Rome, and another letter of the manner of the council; the third also of the cause of Novatus, and again of the repentance of such as fell, whereof there is no word touched at all in these foresaid epistles-decretal.

What trouble this Cornelius had with Novatus, sufficiently is before signified. In this persecution of Decius, he demeaned himself very constantly and faithfully, which sustained great conflicts with the adversaries, as St Cyprian giveth witness, *lib. 1. epist. 1.* Hierome testifieth, that he remained bishop after the death of Decius, to the time of Gallus, and so appeareth also by St Cyprian, which hath these

these words: *Et tyrannum armis & bello postmodum victum, prior sacerdotio suo vicit.* But Damasus and Sabellicus, his followers, affirm, that he was both exiled, and also martyred, under the tyrannous reign of Decius. Of whom Sabellicus writeth this story, taken out (as it seemeth) of Damasus, and saith, That Cornelius, by the commandment of Decius, was banished to a town called Centumcellas, bordering on Hetruria, from whence he sent his letters to Cyprian bishop of Carthage, and Cyprian again to him. This coming to the ears of Decius the emperor, he sendeth for Cornelius, asking him, how he durst be so bold to shew such stubbornness, that he neither caring for the gods, nor fearing the displeasure of his princes, durst against the commonwealth give and receive letters from others? To whom Cornelius answering again, thus purged himself, declaring to the emperor, that letters indeed he had written, and received again concerning the praises and honouring of Christ, and the salvation of souls, but nothing as touching any matter of the commonwealth. And it followeth in the story: Then Decius moved with anger, commanded him to be beaten with plumbats, (which, as saith Sabellicus, is a kind of scourging), and so to be brought to the temple of Mars; either there to do sacrifice, or to suffer the extremity. But he rather willing to die, than to commit such iniquity, prepared himself to martyrdom, being sure that he should die. And so commending the charge of the church unto Stephanus his archdeacon, was brought to the way of Appius, where he ended his life in faithful martyrdom. Eusebius in one place saith that he sat two years, in another place he saith that he sat three years, and so doth Marianus Scotus, following also the diversity of the said Eusebius. Damasus giveth him only two years.

In this foresaid persecution of Decius, it seemeth by some writers also that Cyprian was banished: but I suppose rather his banishment to be referred to the reign of Gallus, next emperor after Decius, whereof more shall be said (Christ willing) in his place hereafter. In the mean time the said Cyprian, *lib. 2. epist. 5. 6.* maketh mention of two that suffered either in the time of this Decius, or much about the same time. Of whom one was Aurelius, a worthy

and



and valiant young man, who was twice in torments for his confession, which he never denied, but manfully and boldly withstood the adversary till he was banished, and also after; and therefore was commended of Cyprian to certain brethren to have him for their lecturer, as in the forenamed epistle of Cyprian appeareth. The other was named Mapalicus, who in the day before he suffered, declaring to the proconsul in the midst of his torments, and saying, *Videbas cras agonem*, that is, "To-morrow you shall see the running for a wager," &c. was brought forth, according as he forespoke, to martyrdom, and there with no less constancy than patience did suffer.

And thus much of the tyranny of this wicked Decius against God his saints. Now to touch also the power of God, his vengeance and punishment against him. Like as we see commonly a tempest that is vehement, not long to continue; so it happened with this tyrannical tormentor, who reigning but two years, as saith Eusebius, or three at most, as writeth Orosius, among the middle of the barbarians, with whom he did war, was there slain with his son. Like as he had slain Philippus and his son his predecessors before, so was he with his son slain by the righteous judgment of God himself. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 1. Platin. Pomponius* affirmeth, that he warring against the Gothians, and being by them overcome, lest he should fall into their hands, ran into a whirlpit, where he was drowned, and his body never found after.

Neither did the just hand of God plague the emperor only, but also revenged as well the Heathen Gentiles and persecutors of his word throughout all provinces and dominions of the Roman monarchy; amongst whom the Lord, immediately after the death of Decius, sent such a plague and pestilence, lasting for the space of ten years together, that horrible it is to hear, and almost incredible to believe. Of this plague or pestilence testifieth Dionysius to Hierax, a bishop in Egypt, *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 21. 22.* where he declareth the mortality of this plague to be so great in Alexandria, where he was bishop, that there was no house in the whole city free. And although the greatness of the plague touched also the Christians somewhat, yet it scourged

ged the Heathen idolaters much more; beside that the order of their behaviour in the one and in the other was much divers. For as the foresaid Dionysius doth record, the Christians, through brotherly love and piety, did not refuse one to visit and comfort another, and to minister to him what need required, notwithstanding it was to them great danger; for divers there were who in closing up their eyes, in washing their bodies, and interring them in the ground, were next themselves which followed them to their graves. Yet all this stayed not them from doing their duty, and shewing mercy one to another: whereas the Gentiles contrarily, being extremely visited by the hand of God, felt the plague, but considered not the striker, neither yet considered they their neighbour, but every man shifting for himself, neither cared one for another, but such as were infected, some they would cast out of the doors half dead to be devoured of dogs and wild beasts, some they let die within their houses without all succour, some they suffered to lie unburied, for that no man durst come near them; and yet, notwithstanding for all their voiding and shifting, the pestilence followed them whithersoever they went, and miserably consumed them; insomuch that Dionysius bishop the same time of Alexandria, thus reporteth of his own city, that such a mortality was then among them, that the said city of Alexandria had not in number so many of all together, both old and young, as it was wont to contain before of the old men only from the age of threescore to seventy, and as were found in time past commonly almost in that city. Pomponius Letus, and other Latin writers, also making mention of the said pestilence, declare how the beginning thereof first came (as they think) out of Ethiop, and from the hot countries, and so invading and wasting first the south parts, from thence spread into the east, and so further running and increasing into all other quarters of the world, especially wheresoever the edicts of the emperor went against the Christians, it followed after and consumed the most part of the inhabitants, whereby many places became desolate and void of all concourse, and so continued the term of ten years together.

This pestiferous mortality (by the occasion whereof Cy-  
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prian took the ground to write his book *De mortalitate*) began, as is said, immediately after the death of Decius the persecutor, in the beginning of the reign of Vibias Gallus, and Volusianus his son, who succeeded through treason next unto Decius, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and five, and continued their reign but two years.

This Gallus, although the first beginning of his reign was something quiet, yet shortly after following the steps of Decius, by whom rather he should have taken better heed, set forth edicts in like manner for the persecution of Christians; albeit in this edict we find no number of martyrs to have suffered, but only all this persecution to rest only in the exilement of bishops or guides of the flock. Of other sufferings or executions we do not read; for the terrible pestilence following immediately, kept the barbarous Heathen otherwise occupied. Unto this time of Gallus, rather than to the time of Decius, I refer the banishment of Cyprian, who was then bishop of Carthage; of the which banishment he himself testifieth in divers of his epistles, declaring the cause thereof to rise upon a commotion or sedition among the people, out of the which he withdrew himself, lest the sedition should grow greater. Notwithstanding the said Cyprian, though being absent, yet had no less care of his flock, and of the whole church, than if he had been present with them, and therefore never ceased in his epistles continually to exhort and call upon them to be constant in their profession, and patient in their afflictions. Amongst divers others whom he doth comfort in his banishment, although he was in that case to be comforted himself, writing to certain that were condemned to mining for metals, whose names were Nemesianus, Felix, Lucius, with other bishops, priests, and deacons, he declareth unto them, "How it is no shame, but a glory, not to be feared, but to be rejoiced at, to suffer banishment or other pains for Christ; and confirming them in the same, or rather commending them, signifieth how worthily they do shew themselves to be as valiant captains of virtue, provoking both by the confessions of their mouth, and by the suffering of their bodies, the hearts of the brethren to Christian martyrdom, whose example was and is a great con-



firmation to many, both maids and children, to follow the like. As for punishment and suffering, it is (saith he) a thing not execrable to a Christian; for a Christian man's breast, whose hope doth wholly consist in the tree, dreadeth neither bat nor club: wounds and scars of the body be ornaments to a Christian man, such as bring no shame nor dishonesty to the party, but rather preferreth and freeth him with the Lord. And although in the mines where the metals be digged there be no beds for Christian mens bodies to take their rest; yet they have their rest in Christ: and though their weary bones lie upon the cold ground, yet it is no pain to lie with Christ. Their feet have been fettered with bands and chains, but happily he is bound of man, whom the Lord Christ doth loose; happily doth he lie tied in the stocks, whose feet thereby are made swifter to run to heaven. Neither can any man tie a Christian so fast, but he runneth so much the faster for his garland of life. They have no garments to save them from cold, but he that putteth on Christ is sufficiently coated. Doth bread lack to their hungry bodies? But man liveth not only by bread, but by every word proceeding from the mouth of God. Your deformity (saith he) shall be turned to honour, your mourning to joy, your pain to pleasure, and felicity infinite. And if this do grieve you, that ye cannot now employ your sacrifices and oblations after your wonted manner, yet your daily sacrifice ceaseth not, which is a contrite and humble heart, as when you offer up daily your bodies a lively and a glorious sacrifice unto the Lord, which is the sacrifice that pleaseth God. And though your travel be great, yet is the reward greater, which is most certain to follow; for God beholding and looking down upon them that confess his name, in their willing mind approveth them, in their striving helpeth them, in their victory crowneth them, rewarding that in us which he hath performed, and crowning that which he hath in us perfected. With these, and such like comfortable words he doth animate his brethren, admonishing them that they are now in a joyful journey, hastening apace to the mansions of the martyrs, there to enjoy, after this darkness, a stable light and brightness, greater than all their passions, according

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ing to the apostle's saying, *These sufferings of this present time, be nothing like comparable to the brightness of the glory that shall be revealed in us, &c.*"

And after the like words of sweet comfort and consolation, writing to Seagrius and Rogatianus, which were in prison and bonds for the testimony of truth, doth encourage them to continue stedfast and patient in the way wherein they have begun to run; for that they have the Lord with them their helper and defender, who promiseth to be with us to the world's end; and therefore willeth them to set before their eyes in their death immortality, in their pain everlasting glory, of the which it is written, *Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.* Item, Although before men they suffered torments, yet their hope is full of immortality, and being vexed in small things, they shall be well requited in great matters; for the Lord hath tried them as gold in the fire. And writeth, moreover, admonishing them that it is appointed from the beginning of the world, that righteousness here should suffer in secular conflicts; for so just Abel was slain in the beginning of the world, and after him all just and good men, the prophets also and the apostles sent of the Lord himself; unto whom all the Lord first gave an example in himself, teaching that there is no coming to his kingdom, but by that way which he entered himself, saying by these words, *He that loveth his life in this world, shall lose it, &c.* And again, *Fear ye not them that slay the body, but have no power to slay the soul.* And St Paul likewise admonishing all them whosoever covet to be partakers of the promises of the Lord, to follow the Lord, saith, *If we suffer together with him, we shall reign together, &c.*

Furthermore, as the same Cyprian doth encourage here the holy martyrs which were in captivity to persist; so likewise, writing to the priests and deacons which were free, he exhorteth them to be serviceable and obsequious, with all care and love, to cherish and embrace them that were in bonds. *Cyprian. lib. 3. epist. 6.* Whereby may appear the fervent zeal and care of this good bishop toward the church of Christ, although being now in exile in the time of this emperor Gallus.

In the same time, and under the said Gallus, reigning with his son Volusianus, was also Lucius' bishop of Rome sent to banishment, who next succeeded after Cornelius in that bishoprick, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and six. Albeit in this banishment he did not long continue, but returned home to his church, as by the epistle of St Cyprian, *lib. 3. epist. 1.* may appear. As to all other bishops of Rome in those primitive days certain decretal-epistles, with several ordinances, be ascribed, bearing their names and titles, as hath been before declared: so also hath Lucius one epistle fathered upon him; in the which epistle he, writing to the brethren of France and of Spain, appointeth such an order and form of the church as seemeth not to agree with the time then present; for so he declareth in that epistle, that a bishop in all places whithersoever he goeth, should have two priests, with three deacons, waiting upon him, to be witnesses of all his ways and doings. Which ordinance, although I deny not but it may be and is convenient, yet I see not how that time of Lucius could serve then for a bishop to carry such a pomp of priests and deacons about him, or to study for any such matter; for so much as bishops commonly in those days were seldom free to go abroad, went they never so secret, but either were in houses close and secret, or in prison, or else in banishment. Moreover, in the said epistle, how pompously writeth he to the church of Rome? "This holy and apostolical church of Rome, (saith he), the mother of all churches of Christ, by the grace of God omnipotent hath never been proved to swerve out of the path of apostolical tradition, neither hath ever fallen or been depraved with heretical innovations; but even as in the first beginning it received the rule of the apostolical faith by his first instructors, the princes of the apostles, so it continueth ever immaculate and undefiled unto the end."

Unto this Lucius also is referred in the decrees of Gratian this constitution, That no minister whatsoever, after his ordination, would at any time re-enter into the chamber of his own wife in pain of losing his ministry in the church, &c. Eusebius, *lib. 7.* making mention of the death of Lucius, and not of his martyrdom, saith, that he sat but  
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eight months : but Damasus in his martyrology holdeth, that he sat three years, and was beheaded the second year of Valerian and Galienus emperors ; and so doth also Marianus Scotus and Nauclerus, with other that follow Damasus, affirm the same.

After him came Stephanus next bishop of Rome following Lucius, whom Damasus, Platina, and Sabellicus affirm to have sit seven years and five months, and to die a martyr ; contrary, Eusebius, and Volateranus holding with him, give him but two years : which part cometh most near to the truth, I leave to the reader's judgment. Of his two epistles-decretal, and of his ordinances out of the same collected, I need not much to say for two respects ; either for that concerning these decretal-epistles, suspiciously entitled to the names of the fathers of the primitive church, sufficiently hath been said before ; or else because both the phrase barbarous and incongrue, and also the matter itself therein contained is such, that although no testimony came against it, yet it easily refelleth itself. As where in the second epistle he decreeth, " That no bishop being expelled out of his seat, or deprived of his goods, ought to be accused of any, or is bound to answer for himself, before that by the law regularly he be restored again fully to his former state, and that the primates and the synod render unto him again all such possessions and fruits as were taken from him before his accusation, as is agreeing both to the laws canon and also secular." First, here I would desire the reader a little to stay, and this to consider with himself, who be these here meant, which either used or might despoil these bishops of their goods, and expulse them from their seats for such wrongful causes, but only kings and emperors, which at this time were not yet christened, nor used any such proceedings against these bishops, in such sort as either primates or synods could restore them again to their places and possessions. Again, what private goods or possessions had bishops then to be taken from them, when as churches yet neither were endued with patrimonies nor possessions ? And if any treasures were committed to the church, it pertained not properly to the bishop, but went in general to the subvention of the poor in the church, as in the epistle of Cornelius to Fabius

Fabius may appear, alledged in Eusebius, *lib. 6. cap. 43.* where he speaking of his church, and declaring how there ought to be but one bishop in the same, inferreth mention of forty and six priests, seven deacons, with seven subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, of widows and poor afflicted persons to the number of fifteen hundred and above, found and nourished in the same by the merciful benignity and providence of God. *Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 43.* It followeth more in the end of the said canon, Which thing is forbidden both by the laws ecclesiastical, and also secular, &c. Now what laws secular were in the time of Steven for bishops not to be charged with any accusation before they were restored again to their state, let any reader marking well the state of the Heathen laws that then were, judge; and in judging I doubt not but this matter alone, though there were no other, will be enough to descry the untruth hereof.

Moreover, by divers other probable notes and arguments in the said second epistle of Stephanus, it may be easily espied this epistle to be feigned and misauthorized, especially by the fifth canon of the said epistle, where he so solemnly entreateth of the difference between primates, metropolitans, and archbishops: which distinction of degrees and titles, favouring more of ambition than of persecution, giveth me verily to suppose this epistle not to be written by this Stephan, but by some other man either of that name, or of some other time, when the church began to be settled in more prosperity, and orders therein to be taken for every man to know his degree and limits of his authority, according as is specified by the sixth and seventh canon of the Nicene council, decreeing of the same matter.

The like estimation may be conceived also of the seventh canon of the said epistle, where he willeth and appointeth all causes judiciary to be decided and determined within the precinct of their own proper province, and not to pass over the bounds thereof, unless (saith he) the appeal be made to the apostolical see of Rome; which favoureth in my nose rather of a smack of Popery, than of the vein of Christianity, especially in these times, during this terrible persecution among the bishops of Christ. And thus much  
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of the second decretal-epistle of Stephanus, although of the first epistle also written to Hilarius, something may be said; as where he speaketh in the said epistle of holy vestments, and holy vessels, and other ornaments of the altar serving to divine worship, and therefore not to be touched nor handled of any man, saving of priests alone. Concerning all which implements my opinion is this; I think the church of Rome not to have been in so good state then, that either Stephanus, or Sixtus before him, being occupied about other more earnest matters, and scarce able to hide their own heads, had any mind or cogitation to study upon such unnecessary inventions serving in public churches. Neither do I see how the Heathen in those days would have suffered these ornaments to be unconsumed, which would not suffer the bishops themselves to live amongst them; notwithstanding Isidorus and Polydorus judge the contrary. Between this Stephanus and Cyprian bishop of Carthage was a great contention about rebaptising of heretics, whereof more hereafter (Christ willing) shall be said.

Besides these bishops above specified, divers other there were also sent into banishment under the forenamed emperors Gallus and Volusianus, as appeareth by Dionysius writing to Hermanus on this wise: That Gallus not seeing the evil of Decius, nor foreseeing the occasion of his seduction and ruin, stumbled himself also at the same stone, lying open before his eyes; for when at the first beginning his empire went prosperously forward, and all things went luckily with him, afterward he drave out holy men, which prayed for his peace and safeguard, and so with them rejected also the prayers which they made for him, &c. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 1.* Otherwise of any bloodshed, or any martyrs that in the time of this emperor were put to death, we do not read.

After the reign of which emperor Gallus and of his son Volusianus being expired, (who reigned but two years), Emilianus, which slew them both by civil sedition, succeeded in their place, who reigned but three months, and was also slain. Next to whom Valerianus and his son Galienus were advanced to the empire.

About the changing of these emperors, the persecution  
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which first began at Decius, and afterward slacked in the time of Gallus, was now extinguished for a time, partly for the great plague reigning in all places, partly by the change of the emperors, although it was not very long; for Valerianus, in the first entrance of the empire, for the space of three or four years, was right courteous and gentle to the people of God, and well accepted of the senate. Neither was there any of all the emperors before him, nor of them which openly professed Christ, that shewed himself so loving and familiar toward the Christians as he did; insomuch that (as Dionysius writing to Herman doth testify) all his whole court was replenished with holy saints and servants of Christ, and godly persons, so that his house might seem to be made a church of God. But by the malice of Satan, through wicked counsel, these quiet days endured not very long. For in process of time this Valerianus being charmed or incensed by a certain Egyptian, a chief ruler of the Heathen synagogue of the Egyptians, a master of the charmers or enchanter, who indeed was troubled for that he could not do his magical feats for the Christians, was so far infatuated and bewitched, that through the detestable provocations of that devillish Egyptian, he was wholly turned unto abominable idols, and to execrable impiety, in sacrificing young infants, and quartering bodies, and dividing the entrails of children new born; and so, proceeding in his fury, he moved the eighth persecution against the Christians, whom the wicked Egyptian could not abide, as being the hinderers and destroyers of his magical enchantings, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and nine.

### The eighth Persecution.

**I**N the which persecution the chief administrators and executors were Emilianus president of Egypt, Paternus and Galerius Maximus, proconsuls in Africa. *Ber-*  
*Anno 259.* gomensis also maketh mention of Paternus vice-  
 gerent of Rome, and of Perennius. Vincen-  
 tius speaketh also of Nicerius and Claudius presidents, &c.  
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What was the chief original cause of this persecution, partly is signified before, where mention was made of the wicked Egyptian. But as this was the outward and political cause, so St Cyprian sheweth other causes more special and ecclesiastical in his fourth book, *epist.* 4. whose words be these: But we (saith he) must understand and confess, that this turbulent oppression and calamity, which hath wasted for the most part all our whole company, and doth daily consume it, riseth chiefly of our own wickedness and sins, while we walk not in the way of the Lord, nor observe his precepts left unto us for our institution. The Lord observed the will of his Father in all points, but we observe not the will of the Lord, having all our mind and study set upon lucre and possessions, given to pride, full of emulation and dissention, void of simplicity and faithful dealing, renouncing this world in word only, but nothing in deed, every man pleasing himself, and displeasing all others. And therefore are we thus scourged, and worthily: for what stripes and scourges do we not deserve, when the confessors themselves, (such as have bid the trial of their confession), and such as ought to be an example to the rest of well-doing, do keep no discipline? And therefore because some such there be, proudly puffed up with this swelling and unmannerly bragging of their confession, these torments come, such as do not easily send us to the crown, except, by the mercy of God, some, being taken away by quickness of death, do prevent the tediousness of punishment. These things do we suffer for our sins and deserts, as by the Lord's censure we have been forewarned, saying, *If they shall forsake my law, and will not walk in my judgments; if they shall profane my institutions, and will not observe my precepts, I will visit their iniquities with the rod, and their transgressions with scourges.* These rods and scourges (saith he) we feel, which neither please God in our good deeds, nor repent in our evil deeds. Wherefore the said Cyprian adding this exhortation withal, exhorted them to pray and intreat, from the bottom of their heart and whole mind, the mercy of God, which promiseth, saying, *But yet my mercy I will not scatter from them, &c.* Let us ask, and we shall obtain; and though (saith Cyprian) it

be with tarriance, yet for so much as we have grievously offended, let us continue knocking; for *to him that knocketh, it shall be opened*, if our prayers, sighings, and weepings knock still at the door with continuance, and if our prayers be joined together with brotherly agreement, &c. Moreover, what vices were then principally reigning among the Christians, he further specieth in the said epistle, which chiefly were division and dissention among the brethren. For when it was spoken to them in a vision by these words, *Petite, & impetrabitis*, that is, "Pray, and ye shall obtain;" afterward it was required of the congregation there present, to direct their prayers for certain persons assigned to them by name; but they could not agree and condescend altogether of the names and persons of them which they should pray for, but were dissonant in their consent and petition: which thing (saith Cyprian) did greatly displease him that spake unto them, Pray, and ye shall obtain, for that there was no uniform equality of voice and heart, nor one simple and joint concord among the brethren, whereof it is written in the hundred and third psalm, *God which maketh to dwell in the house together men of one accord*, &c. And so, by the occasion hereof, he writeth unto them in the foresaid epistle, and moveth them to prayer and mutual agreement. For (saith he) if it be promised in the gospel to be granted whatsoever any two consenting together shall ask, what shall then the whole church do agreeing together? Or what if this unanimity were among the whole fraternity? Which unanimity (saith Cyprian) if it had been then amongst the brethren, *Non venissent fratribus hæc mala, si in unum fraternitas fuisset animata*; that is, "These evils had not happened to the brethren, if the brethren had joined together in brotherly unanimity," &c.

After the causes thus declared of this and other persecution, the said St Cyprian, moreover, in the forenamed epistle, (worthy to be read of all men), describeth likewise a certain vision, wherein was shewed unto him by the Lord before the persecution came, what should happen. The vision was this: There was a certain aged father sitting, at whose right hand sat a young man very sad and pensive, as  
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one with an indignation sorrowful, holding his hand upon his breast, his countenance heavy and uncheerful. On the left hand sat another person, having in his hand a net, which he threatened to lay to catch the people that stood about. And as he was marvelling that saw the sight thereof, it was said unto him, The young man whom thou seest sit on the right hand, is sad and sorry that his precepts be not observed. But he on the left hand danceth and is merry, for that occasion is given him to have power of the aged father to afflict men. And this vision was seen long before this tempest of persecution happened, wherein is declared the same that before is said; the sins of the people to be the cause why Satan, in this persecution and all others, hath had, and hath still such power with his net of destruction to rage against the blood of Christian men; and all because (saith Cyprian) we foreslack our praying, or be not so vigilant therein as we should: wherefore the Lord, because he loveth us, correcteth us; correcteth us to amend us, amendeth us to save us, &c. *Cyprian. lib. 4. epist. 4.*

Furthermore, the same Cyprian, and in the same epistle, writing of his own revelation or message sent to him, thus saith: And to his least servant both sinful and unworthy, (meaning himself), God of his tender goodness hath vouchsafed to direct this word; Tell him (saith he) that he be quiet and of good comfort; for peace will come, albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain yet to be proved and tried, &c. And sheweth also in the same place of another revelation of his, wherein he was admonished to be spare in his feeding, and sober in his drink, lest his mind, given to heavenly meditation, might be carried away with worldly allurements, or oppressed with too much surfeit of meats and drinks, should be less apt or able to prayer and spiritual exercise.

Finally, in the latter end of the foresaid epistle, mention also followeth of other revelations or shewings: Wherein the Lord (saith Cyprian) doth vouchsafe to many of his servants to foreshew to come the restoring of his church, the stable quiet of our health and safeguard; after rain fair weather, after darkness light, after stormy tempest peace-

able calm, the fatherly help of his love, the wont and old glory of his divine majesty, whereby both the blasphemy of the persecutor shall be repressed, and the repentance of such as have fallen be reformed, and the strong and stable confidence of them that stand shall rejoice and glory. Thus much hath St Cyprian written of these things to the clergy. *lib. 4. epist. 4.*

As touching now the crimes and accusations in this persecution laid to the charge of the Christians, this was the principal. First, because they refused to do worship to their idols and to the emperors; then for that they professed the name of Christ: besides, all the calamities and evils that happened in the world, as wars, famine, and pestilence, were imputed only to the Christians. Against all which quarrelling accusations Cyprian doth eloquently defend the Christians in his book *Contra Demetrianum*; like as Tertullian had done before, writing *Contra Scapulam*. And, first, touching the objection for not worshipping idols, he clearth the Christians both in his book *Contra Demetrian.* and also *De vanitate idol.* proving those idols to be no true gods, but images of certain dead kings, which neither could save themselves from death, nor such as worship them; the true God to be but one, and that by the testimony of Sosthenes, Plato, and Trismegistus, the which God the Christians do truly worship. And as concerning that the Christians were thought to be the cause of public calamities, because they worshipped not the Gentiles idols, he purgeth the Christians thereof, proving, that if there be any defect in increase of things, it is not to be ascribed to them, but rather to the decrease of nature, languishing now towards her age and latter end. Again, for that it hath been so foresaid and prophesied, that towards the end of the world should come wars, famine, and pestilence. Moreover, if there be any cause thereof more proper than other, it is most like to be imputed to their vain idolatry, and to the contempt of the true God. Also that such evils be increased by the wickedness of the people, so that to speak in his own words, *Famem majorem facit rapacitas quam siccitas*; that is, "Famine cometh more by avarice of men, than by drought of the air;" but especially the cause thereof to proceed

proceed of the cruel shedding of the innocent blood of the Christians, &c.

Thus, with many other more probations, doth Cyprian defend the Christians against the barbarous exclamations of the Heathen Gentiles. Of which Cyprian, for so much as he suffered in the time of this persecution, I mind (Christ willing) to recapitulate here in ample discourse the full sum, first of his life and bringing up, then of his death and martyrdom, as the worthiness of that man deserveth to be remembered. Of this Cyprian therefore, otherwise named Statius, thus writeth Nicephorus, Nazianzenus, Jacobus de Voragine, Henricus de Erfordia, Volateranus, Hieronymus, and others, That he being an African, and born in Carthage, first was an idolater and Gentile, altogether given to the study and practice of the magical arts; of whose parentage and education in letters from his youth no mention is made, but that he was a worthy rhetorician in Africa; of whose conversion and baptism he himself, in his first book and second epistle, writeth a flourishing and eloquent history. Which his conversion unto the Christian faith, as Hieronymus affirmeth in his commentary upon Jonas, was through the grace of God, and the means of Cecilius a priest, whose name after he bare, and through the occasion of hearing the history of the prophet Jonas. The same Hierome moreover testifieth, how he, immediately upon his conversion, distributed among the poor all his substance; and after that, being ordained a priest, was not long after constituted bishop of the congregation of Carthage. But whether he succeeded Agrippinus, of whom he often maketh mention, (which also was the first author of rebaptism), or some other bishop of Carthage, it remaineth uncertain. But this is most true, he himself shined in his office and dignity with such good gifts and virtues, that, as Nazianzenus writeth, he had the government of the whole East church, and church of Spain, and was called the bishop of the Christian men.

And to the further setting forth (to the praise of God) of his godly virtues wherewith he was endued, appearing as well in his own works to them that list to peruse the same, as also described by other worthy writers; he was courteous  
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and gentle, loving and full of patience, and therewithal sharp and severe in his office, according as the cause required, as appeareth in his first book and third epistle. Furthermore, he was most loving and kind toward his brethren, and took much pains in helping and relieving the martyrs, as appeareth by his letters to the elders and deacons of his bishoprick, that with all study and endeavour they should gently entertain and shew pleasure unto the martyrs in his absence, as partly is touched before.

The third epistle of his first book doth declare of what stomach and godly courage he was in executing his office, and handling his matters. Neither was he void of prudence and circumspection, but was adorned with marvellous modesty, whereby he attempted nothing upon his own head and judgment, but with the consent of his fellow-bishops and other inferior ministers; and that chiefly (among others) doth the tenth epistle of his third book witness. He was of a marvellous liberal disposition towards the poor brethren of other countries; for so often as he had cause of absence, he committed the care of those poor men to his fellow-officers, and wrote unto them, that of their own proper goods they would help their banished brethren to that which was necessary for them, as witnesseth the twenty and fourth epistle of his third book. He recited among other gifts wherewith he was endued, as touching the visions and heavenly admonitions of the persecutions that should follow, and of other matters touching the government of the church in his first book and third epistle, and fourth book and fourth epistle, where he reciteth and expoundeth the form or manner of a certain vision, which we have before sufficiently expressed.

He had moreover great skill in the foreknowledge of things that should chance, as may be gathered in the sixth epistle of his fourth book. Also Augustine doth attribute unto him many worthy virtues, who writeth much in setting forth his gifts of humility in his second book of baptism, the fourth chapter, against the Donatists; and in his seventh book and eleventh chapter, of his long-sufferance and patience; also of his courtesy and meekness: by which virtues he concealed nothing that he understood, but uttered

tered the same meekly and patiently. Also that he kept the ecclesiastical peace and concord with those that were of another opinion than he was of. Lastly, that he neither circumvented nor did prejudice any man, but followed that thing which seemed good in his judgment, it is manifest in St Augustine his first book, *De baptismo contra Donatistas*. Neither is this to be passed with silence, that Hierome writeth that he was very diligent in reading, especially the works of Tertullian: for he saith that he saw a certain old man, whose name was Paulus, which told him he saw the notary of blessed Cyprian, being then an old man, when he himself was but a springal in the city of Rome, and told him that it was Cyprian's wont never to let one day pass without some reading of Tertullian, and that he was accustomed oftentimes to say unto him, Give me my master, meaning thereby Tertullian.

Now a few words touching his exile and martyrdom. Of his epistles which he wrote back to his congregation, leading his life in exile, mention is made above, wherein he sheweth the virtue befitting a faithful pastor, in that he took no less care, as well of his own church, as of other bishops being absent, than he did being present. Wherein also he himself doth signify that voluntarily he absented himself, lest he should do more hurt than good to the congregation by reason of his presence, as is likewise declared before. Thus, from the desolate places of his banishment, wherein he was oftentimes sought for, he writeth unto his brethren, as in his third book and tenth epistle is manifest; which thing seemeth to be done in the reign of Decius or Gallus. But after that he returned again out of exile in the reign of this Valerianus. He was also after that the second time banished of Paternus, the proconsul of Africa, into the city of Thurbin, as the oration of Augustine touching Cyprian sheweth; or else, as Pontius the deacon saith, into a city named Furabilitana, or Curabilitana. But when Paternus the proconsul was dead, Gallienus Maximus succeeded in the room and office of Paternus, who finding Cyprian in a garden, caused him to be apprehended by his sergeants, and to be brought before the idols to offer sacrifice. Which when he would not do, then  
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the proconsul breaking forth in these words, said, Long hast thou lived in a sacrilegious mind, and hast gathered together men of a wicked conspiracy, and hast shewed thyself an enemy to the gods of the Romans, and to their holy laws: neither could the sacred emperors Valerianus and Galienus revoke thee to the sect of their ceremonies. At length the wicked tyrant condemning him to have his head cut off, he patiently and willingly submitted his neck to the stroke of the sword, as Hieronymus affirmeth. And so this blessed martyr ended this present life in the Lord, Xistus then being bishop of Rome, as Eusebius noteth, in the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and nine. Sabellicus saith, that he was martyred in the reign of Gallus and Volusianus, Lucius being bishop of Rome; but that seemeth not like.

Now remaineth to speak something likewise of his works and books left behind him, although all peradventure that he wrote do not remain; whereof some are missing, some again, in the livery of his name and title, are not his: but such as be certainly his, by the stile and sense may soon be discerned; such is the eloquence of his phrase, and gravity of his sentence, vigour of wit, power in persuasion, so much differing from many others, as he can lightly be imitated but of few. Of the which his books with us extant, as the flourishing eloquence is worthily commended, proceeding out of the school of rhetoricians, so is the authority thereof no less of reputation, not only among us of this age of the church, but also among the ancient fathers. Whereof St Augustine speaking in his commendation, saith, *Ego (inquit) literas Cypriani non ut canonicas habeo, sed eas ex canonicis considero: & quod in eis divinarum scripturarum authoritati congruit cum laude ejus accipio; quod autem non congruit, cum pace ejus respuo, &c. August. contra Grefonium. lib. 12. cap. 32.* By which words it may appear, that Augustine, although he did not repute the books and writings of Cyprian to be equivalent with the holy scripture, yet notwithstanding next after the holy scriptures he had the same in exceeding great admiration.

Vincentius and Laziardus Celestinus reciting the names of divers books, bearing the title of Cyprian, (more perchance than be truly his), do collect out of them a certain  
extract



Extract of his most pithy sentences, all which here to repeat were too tedious. To give a taste of the special, I thought it not impertinent. As where he speaking of the treasures of a rich man, exhorteth, saying,

*Ne dormiat in thesauris tuis, quod pauperi prodesse potest.*

Let it not sleep in thy treasures, that may profit the poor.

*Duo nunquam veterascunt in homine; cor semper novas cogitationes machinando; lingua, cordis vanas conceptiones proferendo.*

Two things never wax old in man, the heart ever imagining new cogitations, the tongue ever in uttering the vain conceptions of the heart.

*Quod aliquando de necessitate amittendum est, sponte pro divina remuneratione distribuendum est.*

That which a man must needs forego of necessity, wisdom it is for a man to distribute so, that God may everlastingly reward him.

*Disciplina est morum presentium ordinata correctio, & malorum prateritorum regularis observatio.*

Discipline is an ordinate amendment of manners present, and a regular observation of evils past.

*Integritas ibi nulla esse potest, ubi, qui improbos damnant, desunt; & soli, qui damnantur, occurrunt.*

There can be no integrity, whereas they which should condemn the wicked are ever wanting; and they only which are to be condemned, are ever present.

*Avari ad hoc tantum possident quæ habent, ut ne alteri possidere liceat.*

A covetous man only possesseth his goods for this, because another should not possess them.

*Sericum & purpurum induta Christum induere non possunt.*

Women that advance themselves in putting on silks and purple, cannot lightly put on Christ.

*Feminae crines suos inficiunt malo presagio; capillos enim sibi flammeos auspicari non metuunt.*

They which colour their locks with red and yellow, begin betime to prognosticate of what colour their hair shall be in hell.

*Qui se pingunt in hoc seculo, aliter quam creavit Deus; metuant;*

*tuant, ne cum resurrectionis venerit dies, artifex creaturam suam non recognoscat.*

They which love to paint themselves in this world, otherwise than God hath created them, let them fear, lest when the day cometh of resurrection, the Creator will not know them.

*Qui pauperi eleemosynam dat, Deo suavitatis odorem sacrificat.*

He that giveth an alms to the poor, sacrificeth to God an odour of sweet smell.

*Contemnenda est omnis injuria presentium malorum, fiducia futurorum bonorum.*

All injury of evils present is to be neglected, for the good hope of good things to come.

*Nihil prodest verbis proferre virtutem, & factis destruere.*

To set out virtue in words, and to destroy the same in facts, is nothing worth.

*Quo plures domi sunt tibi liberi, hoc plus tibi non recondendum, sed erogandum est, quia multorum jam delicta redimenda sunt, multorum purganda conscientie.*

The more children and greater household thou hast at home, the more cause thou hast not to hoard up, but to disperse abroad, for that many sins are to be redeemed, many consciences are to be purged.

Moreover, lest the Papists here should take an occasion by this text, grounded upon the text of *Tob. cap. iv.* Alms (saith he) delivereth from all sin and death, to build up the works of satisfaction, the said Cyprian, *lib. 4. epist. 2.* more plainly expoundeth both himself, and that place of scripture, writing in these words: *Quia scriptum est, eleemosyna ab omni peccato & morte liberat, Tob. iv. Non utique ab ea morte, quam semel Christi sanguis extinxit, & a qua nos salutaris baptismi & redemptoris nostri gratia liberavit, sed ab illa quae per delicta postmodum serpit, &c.*; that is, Alms do deliver from all sin and from death, *Tob. iv.* Not from that (saith Cyprian) which the blood of Christ hath once extinguished, and from which the wholesome grace of our baptism, and of our Redeemer, hath delivered us, but from that death which afterwards creepeth in by sin, &c. *Cyprian. lib. 4. epist. 2.* By which words it is apparent, that

that Cyprian meaneth this deliverance (which cometh by almsgiving) from death and sin, not to be expounded nor to be taken for death everlasting, from which only the blood of Christ doth save us; but for temporal or transitory punishment, which is wont to be inflicted in this body of sin. For so it is nothing repugnant, but that temporal virtues may have their temporal rewards in this life; and likewise sins committed may have temporal punishments both in us and in our families, our eternal salvation standing evermore firm in Christ yet notwithstanding.

The foresaid Vincentius, moreover, speaking of another book of Cyprian, (although the said book be not numbered in the catalogue of his works), maketh mention of twelve abuses, or absurdities in the life of man, which in order be these.

1. *Sapiens sine operibus.* A wise man without good works.
2. *Senex sine religione.* An old man without religion.
3. *Adolescens sine obedientia.* A young man without obedience.
4. *Dives sine eleemosyna.* A rich man without alms.
5. *Fœmina sine pudicitia.* A woman shameless.
6. *Dominus sine virtute.* A guide without virtue.
7. *Christianus contentiosus.* A Christian man contentious.
8. *Pauper superbus.* A poor man proud.
9. *Rex iniquus.* A king unrighteous.
10. *Episcopus negligens.* A bishop negligent.
11. *Plebs sine disciplina.* People without discipline.
12. *Populus sine lege.* Subjects without law.

As we have hitherto set forth the commendation of Cyprian this blessed martyr; so must we now take heed again, that we do not here incur the old and common danger, which the Papists are commonly accustomed to run into, whose fault is always almost to be immoderate and excessive in their proceedings, making too much almost of every thing. So in speaking of the holy sacraments, they make more of them than doth the nature of sacraments require, not using them, but abusing them, not referring or applying them, but adoring them, not taking them in their kind for things godly, as they are, but taking them for God himself, turning religion into superstition, and the



creature to the Creator, the things signifying to the things themselves signified, &c. To the church likewise and ceremonies of the church, to general councils, to the blessed virgin Mary mother of Christ, to the bishop of Rome, and to all other in like case, not contented to attribute that which is sufficient, they exceed moreover the bounds of judgment and verity, judging so of the church, and general councils, as though they could never, or did never err in any jot. That the blessed mother of Christ amongst all women was blessed, and a virgin full of grace, the scripture and truth doth give; but to say, that she was born without all original sin, or to make of her an advocate, or mother of mercy, there they run further than truth will bear. The ceremonies were first ordained to serve but only for order sake, unto the which they have attributed so much at length, that they have set in them a great part of our religion, yea, and also salvation. And what thing is there else almost, wherein the Papists have not exceeded?

Wherefore, to avoid this common error of the Papists, we must beware, in commending the doctors and writers of the church, and so commend them, that truth and consideration go with our commendation. For though this cannot be denied, but that holy Cyprian, and other blessed martyrs were holy men; yet notwithstanding they were men, that is, such as might have, and had their falls and faults; men, I say, and not angels, nor gods; saved by God, not saviours of men, nor patrons of grace. And though they were also men of excellent learning, and worthy doctors, yet with their learning they had their errors also annexed. And though their books be (as they ought to be) of great authority, yet ought they not to be equal with the scriptures. And albeit they said well in most things, yet it is not therefore enough that what they said, it must stand for a truth. That pre-eminence of authority only belongeth to the word of God, and not to the pen of man. For of men and doctors, be they never so famous, there is none that is void of his reprehension. In Origen, although in his time the admiration of his learning was singular, yet how many things be there which the church now holdeth not? But examining him by scriptures, where  
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he said well, they admit him, where otherwise, they leave him. In Polycarpus, the church hath corrected and altered that which he did hold in celebrating the Easter-day after the Jews. Neither can holy and blessed Ignatius be defended in all his sayings; as where he maketh the fasting upon the Sunday or the Sabbath day as great an offence as to kill Christ himself, *Ignat. epist. ad Philip.* contrary to this saying of St Paul, *Let no man judge you in meat and drink*; also where the said Ignatius speaketh *De Virginitate*, and of other things more. Irenæus did hold that man was not made perfect in the beginning. He seemeth also to defend free-will in man, in those things also that be spiritual. He saith, that Christ suffered after he was fifty years old, abusing this place of the gospel, *Quinquaginta annos nondum habes*, &c. Tertullian (whom St Cyprian never laid out of his hands almost) is noted to be a Chiliaft, also to have been of Montanus sect. The same did hold also with Justin, Cyprian, and others, that the angels fell first for the concupiscence of women, *lib. de habitu mulierum*. He defendeth free-will of man after the corruption of nature, inclining also to the error of them which defend the possibility of keeping God's law. Concerning marriage, *Unum matrimonium (inquit) novimus, sicut unum Deum*; that is, "We know (saith he) one marriage, as we know one God;" condemning the second marriage, *lib. de monogam.* Divers other things of like absurdity in him be noted. Justinus also seemeth to have inclined unto the error of the Chiliafts, of the fall of certain angels by women, of free-will of man, of possibility of keeping the law, and such others. Neither was this our Cyprian, the great scholar of Tertullian, utterly exempt from the blot of them, who, contrary to the doctrine of the church, did hold with rebaptizing of such as were before baptized of heretics, whereof speaketh St Augustine, misliking the same error of Cyprian, in these words contained in his second book, *Contra Cresconium*. *Cypriani, inquit, laudem ego consequi non valeo, ejus multis literis mea scripta non comparo, ejus ingenium diligo, ejus ore delector, ejus charitatem miror, ejus martyrium veneror: non accipio quod de baptisandis hæreticis & schismaticis sensit*, &c. Upon the  
which

which matter there was a great contention between the said Cyprian and Stephanus bishop of Rome, as partly before is noted. Of Augustine himself likewise, of Ambrose, Hierome, Chrysostom, the same may be said, that none of them all so clearly passed away, but their peculiar faults and errors went with them, whereof it were too long, and out of our purpose, at this present to intreat. And thus much concerning the story of Cyprian, the holy learned martyr of Christ.

Albeit here is to be noted by the way, touching the life and story of Cyprian, that this Cyprian was not he whom the narration of Nazianzen speaketh of, (as is above mentioned), who from art-magic was converted to be a Christian, which Cyprian was a citizen of Antioch, and afterward bishop of the same city, and was martyred under Dioclesian; whereas this Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, and died under Valerianus, as is said, &c. By the decrees of Gratian, *dist. 10. quoniam*, it appeareth, moreover, that there was also a third Cyprian in the time of Julianus the emperor apostata, long after both these afore named; for so giveth the title prefixed before the said distinction, *Cyprianus Iuliano imperatori*, the distinction beginning, *Quoniam idem mediator Dei & hominum, homo Christus Iesus, sic actibus propriis, & dignitatibus distinctis officia potestatis utriusque discernit*, &c. Upon the which distinction the gloss cometh in with these words, saying, That the popedom, and the seat-imperial, have both one beginning of one, that is, Christ, who was both Bishop, and King of kings; and that the said dignities be distinct, albeit the Pope notwithstanding hath both the swords in his hand, and may exercise them both sometime: and therefore although they be distinct, yet in exercise the one standeth lineally under the other, so that the imperial dignity is subject under the Papal dignity, as the inferior is subject under the superior: that as there is one ruler over the whole world, which is God; so in the church is one monarch, that is the Pope, to whom the Lord hath committed the power and lawful right both of the heavenly and terrene dominion. *Hac glossa.*

Thus much I thought here to note by the way, because this distinction is fathered upon Cyprian, which is false;  
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for this Cyprian was not in the time of Julian, not by two hundred years, and so likewise the other Cyprian, which died martyr under Dioclesian. Of any Cyprian besides these two we read not; neither is it credible, that, if there were any such Cyprian, he would ever have written of any such matter, of the difference and mutual need of Christian emperors and Christian popes; when as that emperor being an apostata, neither regarded Christ, nor cared for any pope.

About this time, and under the same emperor Valerianus suffered also Xistus, or Sixtus, the second of that name, bishop of Rome, who, being accused of his adversaries to be a Christian, was brought with his six deacons to the place of execution, where he, with Nemefius, and other his deacons, were beheaded and suffered martyrdom. Laurence in the same time, being also deacon, followed after, complaining to Xistus, (as one being grieved), that he might not also suffer with him, but to be secluded as the son from the father. To whom the bishop answering again, declared that within three days he should follow after. In the mean time he willed him to go home, and to distribute his treasures, if he had any, unto the poor. The judge, belike hearing mention to be made of treasures to be given to the poor, and thinking that Laurence had great store of treasure in his custody, commanded him to bring the same unto him, according as in the discourse of his story here under written more fully may appear. Which history, because it is set forth more at large in Prudentius, Ambrose, and other writers, and containeth in it more things worthy to be noted of the reader; we have therefore with the more diligence here inserted the more ample description of the same, to the further admiration of his patience, and God his glory shewed in him.

Now then, as order requireth, let us enter the story of that most constant and courageous martyr of Christ St Laurence, whose words and works deserve to be as fresh and green in Christian hearts, as is the flourishing laurel-tree. This thirsty heart longing after the water of life, desirous to pass unto it through the strait door of bitter death, when on a time he saw his vigilant shepherd Xistus, led as an harmless

less lamb of harmful tyrants to his death, cried out with open mouth and heart invincible, saying, O dear father, whither goest thou without the company of thy dear son? Whither hastenest thou, O reverend priest, without thy deacon? Never wast thou wont to offer sacrifice without thy minister. What crime is there in me that offendeth thy fatherhood? Hast thou proved me unnatural? Now try, sweet father, whether thou hast chosen a faithful minister or not? Deniest thou unto him the fellowship of thy blood, to whom thou hast committed the distribution of the Lord's blood? See that thy judgment be not disliked, whilst thy fortitude is liked and lauded. The abasing of the scholar is the disgracing of the master. What! have we not learned that worthy masters have obtained most worthy fame, by the worthy acts of their disciples and scholars? Finally, Abraham sacrificed his only begotten Isaac; stoned Stephen prepared the way to preaching Peter; even so father declare thy manifold virtues by me thy son; offer thou him that proffereth himself; grant that the body of thy scholar may be sacrificed, whose mind with good letters thou hast beautified. These words with tears St Laurence uttered, not because his master should suffer, but for that he might not be suffered to taste of death's cup which he thirsted after.

Then Xistus to his son shaped this answer: I forsake thee not, O my son; I give thee to wit, that a sharper conflict remaineth for thee. A feeble and weak old man am I, and therefore run the race of a lighter and easier death; but lusty and young thou art, and more lustily, yea, more gloriously shalt thou triumph over this tyrant: thy time approacheth, cease to weep and lament, three days after thou shalt follow me; decent it is that this space of time come between the priest and the Levite. It may not beseem thee, O sweet pupil, to triumph under thy master, lest it be said, he wanted an helper. Why cravest thou to be partaker with me in my passion? I bequeath unto thee the whole inheritance. Why requirest thou to enjoy my presence? Let weak scholars go before, and the stronger come after, that those without master may get the victory, which have no need by master to be governed. So Helias  
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left behind him his beloved Heliseus. I yield up into thy hands the succession of my virtues. Such was their contention, not unmeet for so godly a priest, and so zealous a minister, striving with themselves who should first suffer for the name of Christ Jesus.

In tragical histories we have it mentioned, that through joy and admiration people clapped their hands, when Pilades named himself Orestes; Orestes (as truth it was) affirmed himself to be Orestes: Pilades wishing to die for Orestes, Orestes not suffering Pilades to lose his life for his sake: but neither of them might escape death; for both these lovers were guilty of blood, the one committing the fact, the other consenting. But this our Laurence, the martyr most constant, was by no means enforced to make this proffer, saving only by his ardent zeal and fervent spirit, who thirsting after the cup of martyrdom, had it shortly after filled to the hard brim.

Now let us draw near to the fire of martyred Laurence, that our cold hearts may be warmed thereby. The merciless tyrant understanding this virtuous Levite not only to be a minister of the sacraments, but a distributer also of the church-riches, (whereof mention is made before in the words of Xistus), promised to himself a double prey by the apprehension of one silly soul; first, with the rake of avarice, to scrape to himself the treasure of poor Christians; then with the fiery fork of tyranny so to toss and turmoil them, that they should wax weary of their profession. With furious face and cruel countenance the greedy wolf demanded where this deacon Laurence had bestowed the substance of the church? Who craving three days respite, promised to declare where the treasure might be had. In the mean time, he caused a good number of poor Christians to be congregated. So when the day of his answer was come, the persecutor strictly charged him to stand to his promise. Then valiant Laurence, stretching out his arms over the poor, said, These are the precious treasure of the church, these are the treasure indeed, in whom the faith of Christ reigneth, in whom Jesus Christ hath his mansion-place. What more precious jewels can Christ have, than those in whom he hath promised to dwell? For so it is

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written, *I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink; I was habourless, and ye lodged me.* And again, *Look what ye have done to the least of these, the same have ye done to me.* What greater riches can Christ our master possess, than the poor people, in whom he loveth to be seen? Oh, what tongue is able to express the fury and madness of the tyrant's heart! Now he stamped, he stared, he ramped, he fared as one out of his wits; his eyes like fire glowed, his mouth like a boar foamed, his teeth like a hell-hound grinded. Now not a reasonable man, but a roaring lion he might be called. Kindle the fire (he cried) of wood, make no spare. Hath this villain deluded the emperor? Away with him, away with him, whip him with scourges, jerk him with rods, buffet him with fists, brain him with clubs. Jesteth the traitor with the emperor? Pinch him with fiery tongs, gird him with burning plates, bring out the strongest chains, and the fire-forks, and the grated bed of iron; on the fire with it, bind the rebel hand and foot; and when the bed is fire-hot, on with him, roast him, broil him, toss him, turn him: on pain of our high displeasure do every man his office, O ye tormentors. The word was no sooner spoken, but all was done.

After many cruel handlings, this meek lamb was laid, I will not say on his fiery bed of iron, but on his soft bed of down. So mightily God wrought with his martyr Laurence, so miraculously God tempered his element the fire, not a bed of consuming pain, but a pallet of nourishing rest was it unto Laurence. Not Laurence, but the emperor might seem to be tormented; the one broiling in the flesh, the other burning in the heart. When this triumphant martyr had been pressed down with fire-pikes for a great space, in the mighty Spirit of God he spake to the vanquished tyrant:

*This side is now roasted enough, turn up, O tyrant great;  
Assay whether roasted or raw, thou think'st the better meat.*

O rare and unaccustomed patience! O faith invincible! that not only not burnest, but by means unspeakable dost recreate, refresh, stablish, and strengthen those that are burned,

burned, afflicted, and troubled. And why so mightily comfortest thou the persecuted? Because through thee they believe in God's promises infallible. By thee this glorious martyr overcometh his torments, vanquisheth this tyrant, confoundeth his enemies, confirmeth the Christians, sleepeth in peace, and reigneth in glory. The God of might and mercy grant us grace, by the life of Laurence, to learn in Christ to live, and by his death to learn for Christ to die. Amen.

Such is the wisdom and providence of God, that the blood of his dear saints (like good seed) never falleth in vain to the ground, but it bringeth some increase: so it pleased the Lord to work at the martyrdom of this holy Laurence, that by the constant confession of this worthy and valiant deacon, a certain soldier of Rome being therewith compuncted, and converted to the same faith, desired forthwith to be baptized of him; for the which he, being called for of the judge, was scourged, and afterward beheaded. *Henr. de Erford.*

Under the same Valerianus, suffered also Dionysius bishop of Alexandria much affliction and banishment, with certain other brethren; of the which he writeth himself; and is alledged in the ecclesiastical story of Eusebius, *lib. 7. cap. 11.* the words whereof tend to this effect. Dionysius, with three of his deacons, to wit, Maximus, Faustus, and Cheremon, also with a certain brother of Rome, came to Emilianus then president, who were declared unto them in circumstance of words, how he had signified unto them the clemency of his lords and emperors; who had granted them pardon, of life, so that they would return to them, and worship the gods and keepers (as he called them) of their empire, asking them, what answer they would give him thereunto? trusting, as he said, that they would not shew themselves ungrateful to the clemency of them which so gently did exhort them. To this Dionysius answering, said, All men worship not all gods, but divers men divers gods; so as every one hath in himself a mind or phantasy to worship. But we worship not many, nor divers gods, but only that one God, who is the Creator of all things, and hath committed to our lords, Valerianus and Galienus,

the government of their empire, making to him our prayers incessantly for their prosperous health and continuance, Then the president said, And what hurt is it, sith that you may both worship your God, what God soever he be, and these our gods also? for you are commanded to worship such gods, as all men know to be gods. Dionysius answered, We worship none other, but as we have said. Emilianus the president said, I see you are ungrateful men, and consider not the benignity of the emperor; wherefore you shall remain no longer in this city, but shall be sent out to the parts of Libya, unto a town called Cephro; for that place, by the commandment of the emperor, I have chosen for you. Neither shall it be lawful for you to convent your assemblies, or to resort as ye are wont to your burial-places. And if any of you shall be found out of your places whereunto you are appointed, at your peril be it. And think not contrary but ye shall be watched well enough. Depart therefore to the place, as is commanded you. And it followeth more in the said Dionysius speaking of himself; And as for me, (saith he), although I was sick, yet he urged me so strictly to depart, that he would not give me one day's respite. And how (saith he, writing to Germanus) could I congregate or not congregate any assemblies? And after a few lines it followeth: And yet neither am I altogether absent from the corporal society of the Lord's flock, but I have collected them together, which were in the city, being absent, as though I had been present; absent in body, yet present in spirit. And in the same Cephro a great congregation remained with me, as well of those brethren which followed me out of the city, as also of them which were remaining there out of Egypt. And there the Lord opened to me the door of his word; although at the first entrance I was persecuted and stoned among them, yet afterward a great number of them fell from their idols, and were converted unto the Lord. And so by us the word was preached to them which before were infidels: which ministry after that we had accomplished there, the Lord removed us to another place; for Emilianus translated us from thence to more sharp and stricter places of Libya, and commanded us to meet all together



gether at the city of Mareota ; thinking there to separate us severally into sundry villages, or thinking rather to take and prevent us by the way. After we were come thither, it was assigned to me (saith Dionysius) to go to Colluthion, which place I never heard of before ; which was the more grief to me ; yet some solace it was to me, that the brethren told me it was near to a city named Paretonium. For as my being at Cephro got me the acquaintance of many brethren of Egypt, so my hope was, that the vicinity of that place (where I should be) to the city might procure the familiarity and concourse of certain loving brethren, which would resort and assemble with us ; and so it came to pass, &c.

Moreover, the said Dionysius in his epistle, *Ad Domitium & Dydimum*, making mention of them which were afflicted in this persecution of Valerian, recordeth in these words, saying, It were superfluous (saith he) here to recite the names peculiarly of all our brethren slain in this persecution, which both were many, and to me unknown. But this is certain, that there were men, women, young men, maidens, old wives, soldiers, simple innocents, and of all sorts and ages of men. Of whom some with scourgings and fire, some with sword obtained victory, and got the crown. Some continued a great time, and yet have been reserved. In the which number am I reserved hitherto to some other opportune time known unto the Lord, which saith, *In the time accepted I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee, &c.* Now as concerning myself in what state I am, if thou desire to know first how I and Cajus, and Faustus, Petrus, and Paulus, being apprehended by the centurion, were taken away by certain of the town of Mareota, I have declared to you before. Now I and Cajus, and Petrus alone, are left here included in a west place of Libya, distant the space of three days journey from Paretonium, &c. And in process further he addeth : In the city (saith he) were certain which privily visit the brethren ; of priests, Maximus, Dioscorus, Demetrius, and Lucius. For they which were more notable in the world, Faustinus and Aquila, do wander abroad in Egypt. Of the deacons, besides them whom sickness hath consumed,

consumed, Faustus, Eusebius, and Cheremon, are yet alive. Eusebius hath God raised and stirred up to minister to the confessors lying in bands, and to bury the bodies of the blessed martyrs, not without great peril. Neither doth the president cease yet to this day, cruelly murdering such as be brought before him, tearing some with torments, imprisoning and keeping some in custody, commanding that no man should come to them, inquiring also who resorted unto them. Yet notwithstanding God with cheerfulness and daily resort of the brethren doth comfort the afflicted. *Hæc Dionysius.*

Concerning these deacons above recited, here is to be noted, that Eusebius afterward was made bishop of Laodicea in Syria. Maximus the priest aforesaid, had the ministration of the church of Alexandria after Dionysius. Faustus long after continued in great age, unto the later persecution, where he, being a very old man, at length was beheaded, and died a martyr.

As touching Dionysius himself, thus the stories report, that he surviving all these troubles and persecutions, by the providence of God, continued after the death of Valerian unto the twelfth year of the reign of Galienus, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred threescore and eight; and so departed in peace in great age, after that he had governed the church of Alexandria the space of seventeen years, and before that had taught the school of the said city of Alexandria the term of sixteen years; after whom succeeded Maximus, as is above specified. And thus much touching the full story of Dionysius Alexandrinus, and of other also, martyrs and confessors of Alexandria.

In Cesarea Palestine suffered also the same time Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander; the which three dwelling in the country, and good men, seeing the valiant courage of the Christians, so boldly to venture, and constantly to stand, and patiently to suffer in this persecution, as men being grieved with themselves, began to repent and accuse their so great sluggishness, and cowardly negligence, to see others so zealous and valiant, and themselves so cold and faint-hearted in labouring for the crown of Christian martyrdom; and first consulting and agreeing with themselves, they came

to Cefarea, and there stepping to the judge, declared themselves what they were, and obtained the end they came for, being given to the wild beasts. After which manner also, and in the same city of Cefarea, a certain woman, whose name Eusebius expresseth not, who had been before of the sect of Marcion, was brought before the president, and likewise obtained the same martyrdom. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 12.*

Neither was the city of Carthage all this while free from the stroke of this persecution, if credit should be given to the speculative glass of Vincentius, who citing it out of Hugo, recordeth of three hundred martyrs; of which three hundred martyrs, the story saith thus, That the president setting before them coals and incense to do sacrifice by a lime-kiln, which was there near at hand, offered unto them this condition, either to set incense to the coals for sacrifice to Jupiter, or else to go into the furnace of lime; whereupon they altogether with a general motion, suddenly rushed into the kiln, and there with the dusty smoke of the lime were smothered. *Vincent. Erford. lib. 11. cap. 83.*

In Africa also, in the city of Tuburba, the said Vincentius out of the martyrology inferreth mention of three constant virgins, Maxima, Donatilla, and Secunda; who, in the persecution of this Valerian and Galienus, first had given for their drink vinegar and gall, then with scourges were tried, after that upon the gibbet were tormented and rubbed with lime, then were scorched upon the fiery grid-iron, at last were cast to the wild beasts, who, being not touched of them, finally with the sword were beheaded. *Vincent. Erford.*

In Simela, a city in Italy, under the Alps, one Pontius being there apprehended, by the commandment of Claudius the president, was hanged first upon the rack, then was cast to the wild beasts, of whom he being nothing hurt, was after committed to the fire; and finally, not touched therewith, (if the story of Vincentius be true), was beheaded by the river's side, and his body thrown into the flood; where immediately the same hour, the foresaid Claudius, with his assistant Anabius, were taken with wicked spirits,  
by



by whom they were so miserably vexed, that they bit off their tongues, and died.

Zenon, bishop of Verona, is said also in the same persecution to sustain martyrdom.

Moreover, in the same city of Alexandria aforesaid, Bergomensis in his eighth book, writing of the story of Valerianus emperor, maketh mention of Philippus, bishop of the said see of Alexandria, who (as he saith) was under the said Valerian beheaded. But that is not to be found in any approved story, nor standeth it with the truth of time that any such Philip was then bishop of Alexandria, or any other, except only Dionysius. After whom next succeeded Maximus, who remained eighteen years, and after him Theonas, &c. So that, by the ancient records of old writers, it appeareth not that Philippus, or any other of that name, was bishop of Alexandria, during this time signified by Bergomensis.

Although in some other later writers, as Equilinus, Antoninus, and Bergomensis, I find a certain history of one Philippus, president of Alexandria about the same time of Valerian and Galienus, elected by the emperor and senate of Rome to govern those quarters, where he was at length converted to the Christian faith, and after made priest or bishop (as they say) of Alexandria: but that not to be so, the testimony of ancient writers doth manifest. The history of this Philippus, witnessed in our later chronicles, is this: Philippus being promoted to the presidentship of Alexandria came down with his wife Claudia, and his two sons, Avitus and Sergius, and with his daughter named Eugenia; of the which Eugenia a long history, full of strange and prodigious miracles, is written of Antoninus and others, whereof many things I will cut off, and briefly touch the effect of the story, leaving to the judgment of the reader the credit of mine authors, as he shall see cause.

This Eugenia daughter of Philippus, being of singular beauty, and diligently brought up by her parents in the study of science and learning, was, by occasion of hearing Christians, reduced and brought up to Christianity, with two other eunuchs her school-fellows, called Prothus and Hiacinthus: with whom she taking counsel, upon occasion  
(whether

(whether to avoid the danger of persecution, or refusing to marry with a Pagan) unknown to her parents and friends, did flee away; and because the more boldly she might resort to hear the readings of Helenus, then an aged bishop, and of others, she changed herself into man's apparel, and named herself Eugenius; under the which name she was at length admitted unto a certain monastery, or a society of Christians in the suburbs of Alexandria, (although I hardly believe that any monastery of Christians was then in the suburbs of Alexandria permitted), where also at the last, for her excellency of learning and virtue, she was made head of the place.

Here, by the way, I omit the miracles of the foresaid Helenus, bishop (as the story saith) of Hieropolis, how he carried burning coals in his lap, and how he adventured himself to go in the burning fire, to rescue wicked Zereas a Pagan, remaining in the same unburned. Here also I omit the careful search of her parents for her, and of the answer of the Pythoniss again unto them, that she was taken up to heaven among the goddesses. I omit, moreover, the miracles done by the said Eugenia, in healing the diseases and sicknesses of such as came to her, &c. The story proceedeth thus: Among others which were by this Eugenius cured and restored, there was a certain matron of Alexandria, named Melancia; who, after she had used the help and acquaintance of Eugenius, supposing her to be a man, fell into an inordinate love of her, seeking by all means how to accomplish the lust of her concupiscence; insomuch that in her daily visiting of her, at length she began secretly to break her mind, and to entice her to her lewdness. Eugenius contrarily exhorted her to virtue and honesty, shewing her the miseries of this life, and the peril of that folly. Melancia seeing that by no means she would be allured, nor by force drawn to her desire, and fearing, moreover, that she, in detecting of her, would bring her to shame, beginneth first to make an outcry of Eugenius, declaring how that she went about corruptly to deflower her; and so presented her accusation before Philippus the president, as well against Eugenius, as also against the rest of that company. This matter being heard, and the woman well

known, the crime began to seem suspicious, and so much the more, because it was objected against the Christians. By reason whereof Eugenius, with her fellow Christians, was now not only in great hatred, but also in danger of present death and destruction. Then Eugenius purging herself and her honesty, although with sufficient probation, yet notwithstanding perceiving that whatsoever she said could take no place, and seeing no time now to dissemble any longer, for the danger as well of her ownself, as specially of her brethren, which troubled her more; she desired of the judge place and time to make manifest to him the truth, and so shewed herself what she was, and how she was his daughter, the other to be Prothus and Hiacinthus, the two eunuchs, her school-fellows, uttering moreover to him and to her brethren, the cause of her departing from them. At the narration whereof, Philippus her father, and her two brethren coming to the knowledge of her, conceived no little joy, in receiving their Eugenia again, whom they thought had been lost. No less gladness was among the people, to see the evidence of the matter so plainly to try out the truth of the one, and the falseness of the other. Whereat the malignant accuser was with double shame confounded, first for her dishonesty falsely cloaked, secondly for the untruth of her accusation openly detected. Bergomensis addeth moreover, that the said accuser was stricken presently with lightning. Thus Eugenia trying her honesty to her parents and friends, was not only received of them again, but also by the grace of the Lord working with her, in the space of time did win them to Christ. Whereby Philippus the father of her by nature, now by grace was begotten of his own daughter to a more perfect life; and whom once he thought to have been lost, not only he found again, but also with her found his own soul, and his own life, which before he had lost indeed. This Philippus (saith the story) was made afterward bishop of Alexandria, and there suffered martyrdom. Concerning whose martyrdom I deny not but it may be true; but that he was bishop of Alexandria, that cannot be admitted, as is before sufficiently proved out of Eusebius, and other ancient historians.

Likewise



Likewise it is said, that Eugenia, after the martyrdom of her father, returning to Rome with Prothus and Hiacinthus, by occasion of converting Basilla (who should have been married to a Pagan husband, and was then beheaded) to the Christian faith, was assailed with sundry kinds of death; first, being tied to a great stone and cast into Tiber, where she was carried up from drowning; then put in the hot baths, which were extinguished, and she preserved; afterward by famishment in prison, where they say she was fed at the hand of our Saviour: all which legendary miracles I leave to the reader to judge of them as shall seem good unto him. At last the story saith, she was with the sword beheaded. *Antonin. Bergom. Ado.*

And because in this present history mention was made of Helenus, whom Antoninus with his fellows noteth to be the bishop of Hieropolis, here is to be understood and observed by the way, that as Philippus in the foresaid history is falsely said to be bishop of Alexandria, so likewise untrue it is, that Helenus was bishop of Hieropolis; for by Eusebius it appeareth, *lib. 7. cap. 5.* alledging the words of Dionysius, that he was bishop of Tarsus, in Cilicia, and had there oversight of that church from the time of our Lord God two hundred fifty and four, to the year of our redemption two hundred seventy and four.

The sixth year of Valerianus and Galienus we read in the history of Herfordiensis, cited out of Isuardus, of Victor and Victorinus, who lying in *Anno 262.* prison the space of three years, with Claudianus and Boffa his wife, are said to have sustained great torments and martyrdom for the testimony and name of Christ. *Ex Isuardo.*

Aurelius Prudentius, in his book entitled *Peristephanon*, inferreth mention of Fructuosus, bishop of Tarraconia in Spain, who, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, suffered also martyrdom, being burned after six days imprisonment, under the foresaid emperors in this persecution. The cause of their punishment was for the profession of Christ's name; their judge and condemner was Emilianus; their imprisonment endured six days; the kind of death ministered unto them was fire, wherein they being

all together cast with their arms bound behind them, their bands (as Prudentius writeth) were dissolved, their hands untouched with the fire, and their bodies remaining whole. The charge of this judge unto the bishop was this, that he should worship the gods whom the emperor Galienus worshipped. To whom Fructuosus the bishop answering; Nay, (saith he), I worship no dumb god of stocks and blocks, whom Galienus doth worship, but I worship the Lord and Master of Galienus, the Father and Creator of all things, and his only Son sent down to us, of whose flock I am here the pastor and shepherd. At this word Emilianus answering again; Nay, (saith he), say not thou art, but say thou wast. And forthwith commanded them to be committed to the fire, where (as is said) their bands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of them that stood by, praying also that the element, which seemed to fly from them, might work his full force upon them, and speedily dispatch them; which was after their request obtained. In the mean space, as they were in the fire, there was a certain soldier in the house of Emilianus, who did see the heavens above to open, and these foresaid martyrs to enter into the same; which soldier likewise shewed the sight the same time unto the daughter of Emilianus the president, who, beholding the same sight with the soldier, was a present witness of the blessedness of them whom her cruel father had condemned.

As this godly bishop was preparing to his death, (saith Prudentius), the brethren approaching to him, brought him drink, desiring him with much weeping to receive and drink with them; but that he refused to do, requiring them moreover to refrain their tears. With like readiness the brethren also were diligent about him to pluck off his shoes and hose, as he was addressing himself to the fire; but neither would he suffer any servants help in that wherein he was no less willing than able to help himself. And thus this blessed and fruitful bishop Fructuosus, with his two deacons Augurius and Eulogius, being brought to the fire, witnessed the constant confession of the name of Christ with

with the shedding of their blood. *Aurel. Prudentius, Ado, Equilins.*

And thus far continued wicked Valerian in his tyranny against the saints of Christ. But as all the tyrants before, and oppressors of the Christians, had their deserved reward at the just hand of God, which rendereth to every man according to his works; so this cruel Valerian, after he had reigned with his son Galienus the term of six or seven years, and about two years had afflicted the church of Christ, felt the just stroke of his hand, whose indignation before he had provoked, whereof we have to witness Eutropius, Pollio, Sabellicus, Volateranus; for making his expedition against the Persians, whether by the fraud and treason of some about him, or whether by his own rashness, it is doubtful; but this is certain, that he fell into the hands of his enemies, being about the age of fourscore years; where he led his wretched age in a more wretched captivity: inasmuch that Sapor the king of the Persians used him, (and well worthy), not for his riding fool, but for his riding block; for whensoever the king should light upon his horse openly in the sight of the people, Valerian, emperor *quondam*, was brought forth instead of a block for the king to tread upon his back in going to his horseback. And so continued this blockish butcherly emperor with shame and sport enough unto his final end, as witnesseth Letus and Aurelius Victor.

Albeit Eusebius, in a certain sermon to the congregation, declareth a more cruel handling of him, affirming that he was slain, writing in these words: *Sed & tu, Valeriane, quoniam eandem homicidiorum sevitiā erga subditos Dei exercuisti, justum Dei judicium declarasti, dum captivus ac vinctus una cum ipsa purpura ac reliqua imperatorio ornatu abductus, ac tandem a Sapore Persarum rege excoriari jussus saleque conditus, perpetuum infelicitatis tue trophæum erexisti, &c.*; that is, "And thou, Valerian, for so much as thou hast exercised the same cruelty in murdering of the subjects of God, therefore hast proved unto us the righteous judgment of God, in that thyself hast been bound in chains, and carried away for a captive-slave with thy gorgeous purple, and thy imperial attire; and at length also, being commanded of Sapor,



pores, king of the Persians, to be slain and powdered with salt, hast set up unto all men a perpetual monument of thine own wretchedness, &c." *Euseb.*

The like severity of God his terrible judgment is also to be noted in Claudius, his president and minister of his persecutions. Of which Claudius Henricus de Erfordia thus writeth, that he was possessed and vexed of the devil, in such sort, that he biting off his own tongue in many small pieces, so ended his life. *Erford.*

Neither did Galienus the son of Valerian, after the captivity of his father, utterly escape the righteous hand of God: for beside the miserable captivity of his father, whom he could not rescue, such portents strange and out of the course of nature, such earthquakes did happen; also such tumults, commotions, and rebellions did follow, that Trebellio doth reckon up to the number of thirty together, which in sundry places all at one time took upon them to be tyrants and emperors over the monarchy of Rome, by the means whereof he was not able to succour his father, though he would. Notwithstanding the said Galienus, being (as is thought) terrified by the example of his father, did remove, at least did moderate the persecution, stirred up by the edicts of Valerian his father, directing forth his imperial proclamation, the tenor whereof proceedeth after this effect, as is to be seen in Eusebius, *lib. 7. cap. 13.* "Emperor and Cæsar, Publius Licinius, Galienus, Pius, Fortunatus, Augustus, unto Dionysius, to Pinna, and to Demetrian, and to all other the like bishops. The bountiful benignity of my gift I have willed and commanded to be proclaimed through the whole world, to the intent that such, which are detained in banishment for discipline sake, may safely return home again from whence they came; and for the same cause I have here sent to you the example of my rescript for you to peruse and to enjoy; so that no man be so hardy to vex or molest you; and this, which you may now lawfully enjoy, hath been long since by me granted. And therefore for your more warrant in the same, I have committed the exemplar hereof to the custody of Aurelianus Cirenus my chief steward, where you may fetch the copy to see at your pleasure."

This

This mandate above prefixed did Galienus send to Dionysius Alexandrinus, and other bishops, as is premised. Another rescript also the said Anno 263. emperor sent to other Christian bishops, permitting to them full liberty to receive again their wonted places where they were wont to associate together, called of them *Cœmiteria*.

By this it may appear, that some peace was granted then under this Galienus to the church of Christ; albeit not so but that some there were which suffered, of whom was one Marinus, mentioned in Eusebius, *lib. 7. cap. 14*. This Marinus, being a warriour and a nobleman in Cesarea, stood for the dignity of a certain order, which by all order of course was next to fall upon him by right, had not the envious ambition of him that should follow next after him, supplanted him both of office and life; for he accused him to be a Christian, and therefore said, that he was not to be admitted unto their offices, which was against their religion. Whereupon Achaius, then being judge, examined him of his faith; who finding him to be a Christian indeed, and constantly to stand to his profession, gave him three hours to deliberate and advise with himself. There was the same time in Cesarea a bishop named Theotechnus, otherwise called Theodistus, who perceiving him to stand in doubtful deliberation and perplexity in himself, took him by the hand, and brought him into the house or church of the Christians, laying before him a sword, (which he had under his cloak for the same purpose), and a book of the New Testament, and so willed him to take his free choice which of them both he would prefer. The soldier immediately without delay ran to the book of the gospel, taking that before the sword. And thus, he being animated by the bishop, presented himself boldly before the judge, by whose sentence he was beheaded, and died a martyr. *Eusebius ibidem*.

Whose body being dead, one Asyrius, a noble senator of Rome, and a man very wealthy among the chief of that order, (who in the same time was there present at his martyrdom), took up and bare upon his own shoulders, wrapping

ping it in a rich and sumptuous weed, and so honourably committed it to the burial. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 16.*

Of which Asyrius the said author writeth moreover this story: how that, in the foresaid city of Cesarea, the Gentiles used thereof an ancient custom to offer up a certain sacrifice by a fountain side; the which sacrifice, by the working of the devil, was wont suddenly to vanish out of their eyes, to the great admiration of the inhabitants by. Asyrius seeing this, and pitying the miserable error of the simple people, lifting up his eyes to heaven, made his prayer to Almighty God, in the name of Christ, that the people might not be seduced of the devil any longer: by the virtue of whose prayer, the sacrifice was seen to swim in the water of the fountain; and so the strange wonder of that sight was taken away, and no such matter could be there wrought any more. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 17.*

And because mention is made here of Cesarea, there followeth in the next chapter of the same author, a strange miracle, if it be true, which he there reporteth; how that out of the same city was the woman which in the gospel came to our Saviour, and was healed of her bloody issue, her house being in the city of Cesarea. Before the door thereof was set up a certain pillar of stone, and upon the pillar an image was made of brasse, of a woman meekly kneeling on her knees, and holding up her hands as one that had some suit. Against the which there was another image also of a man proportioned of the same metal, cunningly engraven in a short seemly vesture, and stretching forth his hand to the woman. At the foot of which pillar grew up a certain herb of a strange kind, but of a more strange operation, which growing up to the hem of his vesture, and once touching the same, is said to have such virtue, that it was able to cure all manner of diseases. This picture of the man (they say) represented the image of Christ. The history is written in Eusebius, *lib. 7. cap. 18.* as is said; the credit whereof I refer to the reader, whether he will think it true or false. If he think it false, yet I have shewed him mine author: if he think it true, then must he think withal that this miraculous operation of the herb proceeded neither by the virtue of the picture,  
nor



nor by the prayer of the other, being both dumb pictures, and engraven no doubt at that time by the hand of infidels; but to be wrought by some secret permission of God his wisdom, either to reduce the infidels at that time to the belief of the story, or to admonish the Christians to consider with themselves what strength and health was to be looked for only of Christ, and no other advocate; seeing the dumb picture, engraven in brass, gave his efficacy to a poor herb to cure so many diseases. This picture (saith Eusebius) remained also to his time, which was under Constantinus the Great.

As touching the line and order of the Roman bishops hitherto intermitted; after the martyrdom of Xistus above specified, the government of that church was committed next to one Dionysius, about the year of our Lord two hundred sixty and six; who continued in the same the space of nine years, as Eusebius saith; as Damasus recordeth, but only six years and two months. Of his decretal-epistles, because sufficient hath been said before concerning that matter, I omit to speak. After whom succeeded Felix in the first year of Probus the emperor, about the year of our Lord two hundred and eighty, who governed that church five years, and died, as Platina saith, a martyr. After him followed Eutychianus, and then Gaius, both martyrs, as the histories of some do record.

About the time of these bishops lived Theodorus bishop of Neocesarea, who is otherwise called Gregorius Magnus, whom also Nicephorus for his miracles calleth *Θαυματουργός*.

Thus Galienus the foresaid emperor reigned, as is declared, with his father Valerian seven years; after whose captivity he ruled the monarchy alone about nine years, with some peace and quietness granted to the church.

The days of this Galienus being expired, followed Claudius, a quiet emperor, as most stories do record. Although Vincentius affirmeth, that he was a mover of persecution against the Christians, and maketh mention of two hundred sixty and two martyrs, which in his time did suffer; but because no such record remaineth *Anno 272.* to be found in Eusebius, who would not have omitted some memorial thereof, if it had been true, there-

fore I refer the same to the free judgment of the reader, to find such credit as it may. This Claudius reigned but two years, after whom came Quintilianus his brother, next emperor, and a quiet prince, who continued but only seventeen days, and had to his successor Aurelianus; under whom Orosius in his seventh book doth number the ninth persecution against the Christians.

### The ninth Persecution.

**H**itherto from the captivity of Valerian, the church of Christ was in some quietness, till the death of Quintilianus, as hath been declared; after whom Aurelianus the next successor possessed the crown; who, in the first beginning of his reign, (after the common manner of all princes), shewed himself a prince moderate and discreet, much worthy of commendation, if his good beginning had continued in a constant course agreeing to the same. Of nature he was severe, and rigorous in correcting, dissolute in manners; insomuch as it was said of him in a vulgar proverb, That he was a good physician, saving that he gave too bitter medicines. This emperor being sick, never sent for a physician, but cured himself with abstinence. And as his beginning was not unfruitful to the commonwealth, so neither was he any great disturber of the Christians, whom he did not only tolerate in their religion, but also in their councils, and they being the same time assembled at Antioch, he seemed not to be against them. Notwithstanding, in continuance of time, through sinister motion and instigation of certain about him, (as commonly such are never absent in all places from the ears of princes), his nature, somewhat inclinable to severity, was altered to a plain tyranny; which tyranny first he shewed, beginning with the death of his own sister's son, as witnesseth Eutropius. After that he proceeded either to move, or at least to purpose persecution against the Christians; albeit that wicked purpose of the emperor the merciful working of God his hand did soon overthrow. For as the edict or proclamation should have been denounced for the persecuting of the Christians,

Christians, and the emperor now ready to subscribe the edict with his hand, the mighty stroke of the hand of the Lord suddenly from above did stop his purpose, binding (as a man might say) the emperor's hands behind him, declaring (as Eusebius saith) to all men, how there is no power to work any violence against the servants of God, unless his permission do suffer them, and give them leave. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 30.* Eutropius and Vopiscus affirm, that as the said Aurelianus was purposing to raise persecution against us, he was suddenly terrified with lightning, and so stopped from his wicked tyranny. Not long after, about the fifth or sixth year of his reign, he was slain between Bisance and Hieraclea, in the year of our Lord two hundred seventy and eight. Thus Aurelianus rather intended than moved persecution. *Anno 276.* Neither is there any more than this found concerning this persecution in ancient histories and records of the church; wherefore I marvel the more that Vincentius, collecting out of the martyrologies, hath comprehended such a great catalogue of so many martyrs, which in France and in Italy (saith he) suffered death and torments under this emperor Aurelianus; whereunto Orosius also seemeth to agree, in numbering this to be the ninth persecution under the said Aurelianus.

Next after Aurelianus the succession of the empire fell to Publius Annius Tacitus, who reigned but six months; after him succeeded his brother Florianus, who reigned but threescore days; and after him followed Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Probus. Of whom more hereafter (God willing) shall appear.

In the mean time, within the compass of these emperors falleth in a story recorded of Eusebius, and not unworthy here to be noted, whereby to understand the faithful diligence of good ministers, what good it may do in a commonwealth.

Mention is made before of Eusebius, the deacon of Dionysius, whom God stirred up to visit and comfort the saints that were in prison and bands, and to bury the bodies of the blessed martyrs departed, not without great peril of his own life, who after was made bishop (as is said) of Laodicea,



dicea. But before he came to Laodicea to be bishop there, it chanced, the said Eusebius remaining as yet at Alexandria, the city to be besieged of the Romans, Pyruchius being their captain. In which siege half of the city did hold with the Romans, the other half withstood them. In that part which went with the Roman captain was Eusebius, being also in great favour with the captain for his worthy fidelity and service shewed. With the other half that resisted the Romans was Anatholius, governor or moderator then of the school of Alexandria, who also was bishop, after the said Eusebius, of Laodicea. This Anatholius, perceiving the citizens to be in miserable distress of famine and destruction, by reason of penury and lack of sustenance, sendeth to Eusebius, being then with the Romans, and certifieth him of the lamentable penury and peril of the city, instructing him moreover what to do in the matter. Eusebius, understanding the case, repaireth to the captain, desiring of him so much favour, that so many as would flee out of the city from their enemies, might be licensed to escape and freely to pass; which was to him eftsoons granted. As Eusebius was thus labouring with the captain, on the other side Anatholius for his part laboured with the citizens, moving them to assemble together, and persuading them to give themselves over, in yielding to the force and might of the Romans. But when the citizens could not abide the hearing thereof; yet (said Anatholius) with this I trust you will be contented, if I shall counsel you, in this miserable lack of things, to avoid out of your city all such superfluities and unnecessary impediments unto you, as old women, young children, aged men, with such other as be feeble and impotent, and not to suffer them here to perish with famine, whose presence can do no stead to you if they die, and less if they live, for spending the victuals which otherwise might serve them that be more able to defend the city. The senate hearing this sentence, and understanding moreover the grant of the captain, promising them their safety, were well consenting thereunto. Then Anatholius, having a special care to them that belonged to the church of Christ, calleth them together with the rest of the multitude, and persuading them  
what

what they should do, and what had been obtained for them, caused them to void the city, and not only them, but also a great number of other more; who, persuaded by him under that pretence, changing themselves in womens apparel, or feigning some impotency, so escaped out of the city. At whose coming out, Eusebius on the other side was ready to receive them, and refreshed their hungry and pined bodies, whereby not only they, but the whole city of Alexandria, was preserved from destruction. *Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 32.*

By this little history of Eusebius and Anatholius, described in Eusebius, *lib. 7. cap. 32.* and briefly here set forth to thee, (gentle reader), thou mayst partly understand the practice of the prelates, what it was in those days in the church, which was then only employed in saving of life, and succouring the commonwealths wherein they lived, as by these two godly persons, Eusebius and Anatholius, may well appear. Unto the which practice, if we compare the practice of our later prelates of the church of Rome, I suppose no little difference will appear.

The next emperor to Florianus (as is said) was Marcus Aurelius Probus, a prince both wise and virtuous, and no less valiant in martial affairs, than fortunate in the success of the same. During his time we read of no persecution greatly stirring in the church, but much quietness, as well in matters of religion, as also in the commonwealth. Insomuch that, after his great and many victories, such peace infused, that his saying was, There needed no more soldiers, seeing there were no more enemies to the commonwealth to fight against. It was his saying also, That his soldiers need not to spend corn and victual, except they laboured to serve the commonwealth. And for the same cause he caused his soldiers to be set a-work about certain mountains in Smyrna, and in Messia, to be planted with vines, and not so much as in winter suffered them to be at rest; therefore by them at length he was slain; after he had reigned the space of six years and four months, in the year of our Lord two hundred eighty and four. *Eutrop.*

Carus, with his two sons Carinus and Numerianus, succeeded next after Probus in the empire; the reign of which  
emperors

emperors continued in all but three years. Of the which three, first Carus, warring against the Persians, was slain with lightning. Of Numerianus his son, being with his father in his wars against the Persians, we find much commendation in Eutropius, Vopiscus, and other writers, which testified him to be a valiant warriour, and an eloquent orator, as appeared by his declamations and writings sent to the senate; thirdly, to be an excellent poet. This Numerianus, forrowing and lamenting for the death of his father, through immoderate weeping fell into a great soreness of his eyes, by reason whereof he keeping close was slain not long after of his father-in-law, named Aper; who traiterously aspiring to the empire, dissembled his death with a false excuse to the people asking for him, saying, For the pain of his eyes he kept in from the wind and weather; till at length by the stench of his body being carried about, his death was uttered.

In the life of this emperor Carus aforesaid, written by Eutropius, in the later edition set forth by Frobenius, I find (which in other editions of Eutropius doth not appear) that Numerianus, the son of this Carus, was he that slew Babylas the holy martyr, whose history before we have comprehended. But that seemeth not to be like, both by the narration of Chrysostom, and also for that Urspergensis declaring the same history, and in the same words as it is in Eutropius, saith, that it was Cyrillus whom Numerianus killed, the story whereof is this: What time Carus the emperor, in his journey going toward the Persians, remained at Antioch, Numerianus his son would enter into the church of the Christians, to view and behold their mysteries. But Cyrillus their bishop would in no wise suffer him to enter into the church, saying, That it was not lawful for him to see the mysteries of God, who was polluted with sacrifices of idols. Numerianus, full of indignation at the hearing of these words, not suffering that repulse at the hands of Cyrillus, in his fury did slay the godly martyr. And therefore justly (as it seemed) was he himself slain afterward by the hands of Aper.

Thus Carus, with his son Numerianus, being slain in the East parts, as is declared, Carinus the other son reigned  
along



alone in Italy; where he overcame Sabinus striving for the empire, and reigned there with much wickedness, till the returning home of the army again from the Persians, who then set up Dioclesian to be emperor; by whom the foresaid Carinus, for the wickedness of his life, being forsaken of his host, was overcome, and at length slain with the hand of the tribune, whose wife before he had defloured. Thus Carus, with his two sons, Numerianus and Carinus, ended their lives, whose reign continued not above three years.

All this mean space we read of no great persecution stirring in the church of Christ, but it was in mean quiet state and tranquillity, unto the nineteenth year of the reign of Dioclesian; so that in counting *Anno 289.* the time from the latter end of Valerian unto this aforesaid year of Dioclesian, the peace of the church, which God gave to his people, seemeth to continue above four and forty years. During the which time of peace and tranquillity, the church of the Lord did mightily increase and flourish, so that the more bodies it lost by persecution, the more honour and reverence it won daily among the Gentiles in all quarters, both Greeks and barbarians; inso-much that (as Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 1.* describeth) amongst the emperors themselves, divers there were which not only bare singular good-will and favour to them of our profession, but also did commit unto them offices and regiments over countries and nations; so well were they affected to our doctrine, that they privileged the same with liberty and indemnity. What needeth to speak of them which not only lived under the emperors in liberty, but also were familiar in the court with the princes themselves, entertained with great honour and special favour beyond the other servitors of the court? As was Dorotheus, with his wife, children, and whole family, highly accepted and advanced in the palace of the emperor; also Gorgonius in like manner, with divers others more, who, for their doctrine and learning which they professed, were with their princes in great estimation. In like reverence also were the bishops of cities and diocesses, with the presidents and rulers where they lived; who not only suffered them to live

live in peace, but also had them in great price and regard, so long as they kept themselves upright, and continued in God his favour. Who is able to number at that time the mighty and innumerable multitudes and congregations assembling together in every city, and the notable concourses of such as daily flocked to the common oratories to pray? For the which cause they, being not able to be contained in their old houses, had large and great churches new builded from the foundation, for them to frequent together. In such increasement, (saith Eusebius), by process of time, did the church of Christ grow and shoot up daily more and more, profiting and spreading through all quarters, which neither envy of men could infringe, nor any devil could enchant, neither the crafty policy of man's wit could supplant, so long as the protection of God his heavenly arm went with his people, keeping them in good order, according to the rule of Christian life.

But as commonly the nature of all men, being of itself unruly and untoward, always seeketh and desireth prosperity, and yet can never well use prosperity; always would have peace, and yet having peace always abuseth the same: so here likewise it happened with these men, which through this so great liberty and prosperity of life began to degenerate and languish unto idleness and delicacy, and one to work spite and contumely against another, striving and contending amongst themselves, for every occasion, with railing words after most despiteful manner; bishops against bishops, and people against people, moving hatred and sedition one against another; besides, also cursed hypocrisy and simulation with all extremity increasing more and more.

By reason whereof the judgment of God, after his wonted manner, (whilst yet the congregation began to multiply), began by a little and a little to visit our men with persecution, falling first upon our brethren, which were abroad in warfare: but when that touched the other nothing or very little, neither did they seek to appease God's wrath, and call for his mercy; but wickedly thinking with ourselves, that God neither regarded nor would visit our transgressions, we heaped our iniquities daily more and more one upon another; and they which seemed to be our pastors, refusing the

the rule of piety, were inflamed with mutual contentions one against another. And thus whilst they were given only to the study of contentions, threatenings, emulations, mutual hatred and discord, every man seeking his own ambition, and persecuting one another after the manner of tyranny; then, then, I say, the Lord, according to the voice of Jeremiah, *took away the beauty of the daughter of Zion, and the glory of Israel fell down from heaven, neither did he remember the footstool of his feet in the day of his wrath.* And the Lord overturned all the comely ornaments of Israel, and destroyed all her gorgeous buildings, and, according to the saying of the psalm, *subverted and extinguished the testament of his servant, and profaned his sanctuary,* in destruction of his churches, and in laying waste the buildings thereof, so that all passengers spoiling the multitude of the people, they were made an obloquy to all the dwellers about. *For he exalted the strength of his enemies, and turned away the help of his sword from her, nor aided her in the battle, but ceased from the purging of her and her seat. He struck down to the ground, and diminished her days, and over all this poured upon her confusion.* All these things were fulfilled upon us, when we saw the temples razed from the top to the ground, and the sacred scriptures to be burnt in the open market-place, and the pastors of the church to hide themselves, some here, some there; some other, taken prisoners with great shame, were mocked of their enemies, when also, according to the saying of the prophet in another place, *Contempt was poured out upon the princes, and they caused to go out of the way, and not to keep the straight path.*

### The tenth Persecution.

**B**Y reason whereof (the wrath of God being kindled against his church) ensued the tenth and last persecution against the Christians, so horrible and grievous, that it maketh the pen almost to tremble to write upon it; so tedious, that never was any persecution before or since comparable to it for the time it continued, lasting the space



of ten years together. This persecution, although it passed through the hands of divers tyrants and workers more than one or two, yet principally it beareth the name of Dioclesian, who was emperor, as is above noted, next after Carus and Numerianus. This Dioclesian, ever having an ambitious mind, aspired greatly to be emperor. To whom Druas his concubine said, that first he should kill a wild boar before he should be emperor. He, taking effect at these words, used much with hands to kill wild boars; but seeing no success to come thereof, he used this proverb, *Ego apros occido, alius pulpamento fruitor*; that is, "I kill the boars, but others do eat the flesh." At length the said Dioclesian being nominated to be emperor, and seeing Aper (who had killed Numerianus the emperor) standing thereby, sware to the soldiers that Numerianus was wrong-

fully killed, and forthwith running upon Aper with his sword slew him, *Vopisc.* After this he being established in the empire, and seeing

on every side divers and sundry commotions rising up against him, which he was not well able himself to sustain, in the first beginning of his reign he chooseth for his colleague Maximianus surnamed Herculus, father of Maxentius. Which two emperors, because of divers wars that rose in many provinces, chose to them two other noblemen, Galerius and Constantius, whom they called Cæsars. Of whom Galerius was sent into the East parts against the Persians. Constantius was sent over to Britain to this our country of England to recover the tribute, where he took to wife Helena, the daughter of king Coill, which was a maiden excelling in beauty, and no less famously brought up in the study of learning, of whom was born Constantinus the Great.

All this while hitherto no persecution was yet stirred of these four princes against the church of Christ, but quietly and moderately they governed the commonwealth; wherefore accordingly God prospered their doings and affairs, and gave them great victories; Dioclesian in Egypt, Maximian in Afric and in France, Galerius in Persia, Constantius in England, and in France also. By reason of which victories, Dioclesian and Maximian, puffed up in pride, ordained

dained a solemn triumph at Rome; after which triumph Dioclesian gave commandment that he should be worshipped as God, saying, that he was brother to the sun and moon, and adorning his shoes with gold and precious stones, commanded the people to kiss his feet.

And not long after, by the judgment of God, for certain enormities used in the church, above touched, began the great and grievous persecution of the Christians, moved by the outrageous cruelty of Dioclesian, which was about the nineteenth year of his reign; *Anno 308.* who in the month of March, when the feast of Easter was nigh at hand, commanded all the churches of the Christians to be spoiled and cast to the earth, and the books of holy scriptures to be burned.

Thus most violent edicts and proclamations were set forth, for the overthrowing, as is said, of the Christians temples throughout all the Roman empire. Neither did there want in the officers any cruel execution of the same proclamations. For their temples were defaced even when they celebrated the feast of Easter. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 2.* And this was the first edict given out by Dioclesian. The next proclamation that came forth, was for the burning of the books of the holy scripture; which thing was done in the open market-place, as before: then next unto that were edicts given forth for the displacing of such as were magistrates, and that with great ignominy, and all other whosoever bare any office, imprisoning such as were of the common sort, if they would not abjure Christianity, and subscribe to the Heathen religion. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 3. & Nicephorus, lib. 7. cap. 4.* *Zonaras* also in his second tome. And these were the beginning of the Christians evils.

It was not long after but that new edicts were sent forth, nothing for their cruelty inferior to the first; for the casting of the elders and bishops into prison, and then constraining them, with sundry kinds of punishments, to offer unto their idols. By reason whereof ensued a great persecution amongst the governors of the church; amongst whom many stood manfully, passing through many exceeding bitter torments, neither were overcome therewith, being tormented and examined divers of them diversly, some scourged all

their bodies over with whips and scourges, some with racks and raisings of the flesh intolerable were cruciated, some one way, some another way put to death. Some again violently were drawn to the impure sacrifice; and as though they had sacrificed, when indeed they did not, were let go. Other some neither coming at all to their altars, nor touching any piece of their sacrifices, yet were borne in hand of them that stood by, that they had sacrificed; and so suffering that false infamation of their enemies, quietly went away. Others, as dead men, were carried and cast away being but half dead. Some they cast down upon the pavement, and trailing them a great space by the legs, made the people believe that they had sacrificed. Furthermore, others there were which stoutly withstood them, affirming with a loud voice that they had done no such sacrifice. Of whom some said they were Christians, and gloried in the profession of that name: some cried, saying, that neither they had nor would ever be partakers of that idolatry; and those, being buffeted on the face and mouth with the hands of the soldiers, were made to hold their peace, and so thrust out with violence. And if the saints did seem never so little to do what the enemies would have them, they were made much of; albeit all this purpose of the adversary did nothing prevail against the holy and constant servants of Christ. Notwithstanding, of the weak sort innumerable there were, which for fear and infirmity fell and gave over, even at the first brunt.

At the first coming down of these edicts into Nicomedia, there chanced a deed to be done, much worthy of memory, of a Christian, being a nobleman born; which moved by the zeal of God, after the proclamation made at Nicomedia was set up, by and by ran and took down the same, and openly tare and rent it in pieces, not fearing the presence of the two emperors, then being in the city. For which act he was put to a most bitter death, which death he with great faith and constancy endured even to the last gasp. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 3. 4. 5.*

After this the furious rage of the malignant emperors, being let loose against the saints of Christ, proceeded more and more, making havock of God's people throughout all quarters



quarters of the world. First, Dioclesian (which had purposed with himself to subvert the whole Christian religion) executed his tyranny in the east, and Maximianus in the west. But wily Dioclesian began very subtilly; for he put the matter first in practice in his own camp, among whom the marshal of the field (as Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 4.* affirmeth) put the Christian soldiers to this choice, whether they would obey the emperor's commandment in that manner of sacrifice he commanded, and so both to keep their offices, and lead their bands, or else to lay away from them their armour and weapons. Whereunto the Christian men courageously answered, that they were not only ready to lay away their armour and weapons, but also to suffer death, if it should with tyranny be enforced upon them, rather than they would obey the wicked decrees and commandments of the emperor.

There might a man have seen very many which were desirous to live a simple and poor life, and which regarded no estimation and honour in comparison of true piety and godliness. And this was no more but a subtle and wily flattery in the beginning, to offer them to be at their own liberty, whether they would willingly abjure their profession or not. As also this was another, that in the beginning of the persecution, there were but a few tormented with punishment, but afterward by little and little he began more manifestly to burst out into persecution. It can hardly be expressed with words, what number of martyrs, and what blood was shed throughout all cities and regions for the name of Christ. Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 7.* saith, that he himself knew the worthy martyrs that were in Palestina. But in Tyre of Phenicia he declareth in the same a marvellous martyrdom made; where certain Christians, being given to most cruel wild beasts, were preserved without hurt of them, to the great admiration of the beholders; and those lions, bears, and libards, (kept hungry for that purpose), had no desire to devour them; which notwithstanding most vehemently raged against those by whom they were brought into the stage, who, standing as they thought without danger of them, were first devoured, But the Christian martyrs, because they could not be hurt  
of

of the beasts, being slain with the sword, were afterward thrown into the sea. At that time was martyred the bishop of Sidon. But Sylvanus the bishop of Gazensis, with nine and thirty others, were slain in the metal mines of Phenicia. Pamphilus the elder of Cesarea, being the glory of that congregation, died a most worthy martyr; whose both life, and most commendable martyrdom, Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 13.* oftentimes declareth, insomuch that he hath written the same in a book by itself. In Syria all the chief teachers of the congregation were first committed to prison, as a most heavy and cruel spectacle to behold; as also the bishops, elders, and deacons, which all were esteemed as men-killers, and perpetrators of most wicked facts. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6.* After that we read of another, whose name was Tirannion, which was made meat for the fishes of the sea; and of Zenobius, which was a very good physician, which also was slain with brickbats in the same place. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 13.*

Furthermore, he maketh mention in the same place of others which were not tormented to death, but every day terrified and feared without ceasing; of some others, that were brought to the sacrifices, and commanded to do sacrifice, which would rather thrust their right hand into the fire, than touch the profane or wicked sacrifice; also of some others, that, before they were apprehended, would cast down themselves from steep places, lest that being taken they should commit any thing against their profession. Also of two virgins, very fair and proper, with their mother also, which had studiously brought them up, even from their infancy, in all godliness, being long sought for, and at the last found, and strictly kept by their keepers; who, whilst they made their excuse to do that which nature required, threw themselves down headlong into a river: also of other two young maidens, being sisters, and of a worshipful stock, endued with many goodly virtues, which were cast of the persecutors into the sea. And these things were done at Antioch, as Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 13.* affirmeth. But Sylvanus the bishop of Emissa, the notable martyr, together with certain others, was thrown to the wild beasts. *Eusebius, lib. 8. cap. 13.*

Divers and sundry torments were the Christians in Mesopotamia

sopotamia molested with; where they were hanged up by the feet, and their heads downwards, and with the smoke of a small fire strangled; and also in Cappadocia, where the martyrs had their legs broken. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 12.*

Henricus de Erfordia maketh mention of the martyrs of Tharsus in Cilicia, as Tharatus, Probus, and Andronicus: but yet the martyrs in the region of Pontus suffered far more passing and sharper torments, whereof I will hereafter make mention, *Eusebius ibid.* So outrageous was the beginning of the persecution which the emperor made in Nicomedia in Bithynia, as before is said, that he refrained not from the slaughter of the children of emperors, neither yet from the slaughter of the most chief princes of his court, whom a little before he made as much of, as if they had been his own children. Such another was Peter, which, among divers and sundry torments, (among whom he being naked was lifted up, his whole body being so beaten with whips and torn, that a man might see the bare bones; and after they had mingled vinegar and salt together, they poured it upon the most tender parts of his body, and lastly roasted him at a soft fire, as a man would roast flesh to eat), as a victorious martyr ended his life. Dorotheus and Gorgonius, being in a great authority and office under the emperor, after divers torments were strangled with a halter: both which being of the privy-chamber to him, when they saw and beheld the grievous punishment of Peter their household companion, Wherefore, (say they), O emperor, do you punish in Peter that opinion which is in all us? Why is this accounted in him an offence, that we all confess? We are of that faith, religion, and judgment that he is of. Therefore he commanded them to be brought forth, and almost with like pains to be tormented as Peter was, and afterwards hanged. *Euseb. Ruffin. lib. 8. cap. 6.* After whom Anthimus the bishop of Nicomedia, after he had made a notable confession, bringing with him a great company of martyrs, was beheaded. These men being thus dispatched, the emperor vainly thought that he might cause the rest to do whatever him listed. To this end came Lucianus the elder of the congregation of Antioch,  
and



and was martyred, after he had made his apology before the emperor. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 13.*

Hermanus also, that monster, caused Serena, the wife of Dioclesian the emperor, to be martyred for the Christian religion; so much did the rage of persecution utterly forget all natural affects. Other martyrs of Nicomedia doth Nicephorus, *lib. 7. cap. 14.* recite, as Eulampius and Eulampia, Agape, Irene, Chionia, and Anastasia, who, under Illyricus chief officer, were bound hand and foot to a post, and burnt. *Vincent. lib. 12. cap. 66.* and also *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6.* mentioneth such another like matter full of horror and grief. There assembled together in their temple many Christian men to celebrate the memory of the nativity of Christ, of every age and sort some. There Maximianus, thinking to have been given a very fit occasion to execute his tyranny upon the poor Christians, sent thither such as should burn the temple; the doors being shut and closed round about, thither came they with fire, but first they commanded the crier with a loud voice to cry, that whosoever would have life should come out of the temple, and do sacrifice upon the next altar of Jupiter they came to; and unless they would do this, they should all be burnt with the temple. Then one, stepping up in the temple, answered, in the name of all the rest, with great courage and boldness of mind, that they were all Christians, and believed that Christ was their only God and King, and that they would do sacrifice to him, with his Father, and the Holy Ghost, and that they were now all ready to offer unto him. With these words the fire was kindled and compassed about the temple, and there were burnt of men, women, and children, certain thousands. There were also in Arabia very many martyrs slain with axes, as *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 12.* There was in Phrygia a city, unto which the emperor sent his edicts that they should do sacrifice to the gods, and worship idols; all which citizens, the major himself, the questor, and chief captain, confessed that they were all Christians. The city upon this was besieged, and set on fire, and all the people. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 11.* In Melitina, a region of Armenia, the bishops and elders were cast in prison. *Euseb. eodem cap. 6.* In Arabrace, a region  
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near adjoining to Armenia, Eustratius was martyred, as Nicephorus declareth, *lib. 7. cap. 14.* This Eustratius was that country-man born, and very skilful in the Greek tongue, executing, by the emperor's commandment, the sheriff's office, at Licia in the East, which also did execution there upon the Christians, and was a scribe of great estimation, called *ordinis ducalis.* This man, beholding the marvellous constancy of the martyrs, thirsted with the desire of martyrdom, for that he had privily learned the Christian religion. Therefore he, not abiding for other accusers, detected himself, and worthily professed that he was a Christian, openly execrating the madness and vanity of the wicked Ethnics. He therefore being carried away, was tied up, being first most bitterly beaten; after that he was parched with fire being put unto his bowels, and then basted with salt and vinegar; and, lastly, so scorched and bemangled with the sherds of sharp and cutting shells, that his whole body seemed to be all one continual wound; howbeit, by God's great goodness, afterward it was restored to the first integrity. After this he was carried away to Sebastia, where, with his companion Orestes, he was burnt. At that time also suffered Eugenius, Aurentius, Mardarius, *Nicephor. lib. 7. cap. 14.* And in no less wise raged this persecution throughout all Egypt, where Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 13.* maketh mention of Peleus and Nilus martyrs and bishops in Egypt. But at Alexandria especially were declared most notable conflicts of Christian and true constant martyrs that suffered; which Phileas the bishop of Thumitan describeth, as after (God willing) shall be declared. In this persecution of Alexandria, the principal that then suffered was Peter the bishop of Alexandria, with the elders of the same, most worthy martyrs, as Faustus, Didius, and Ammonius, also Phileas, Hesichius, Pachiminus, and Theodorus, which all were bishops of the congregations within Egypt; and besides them many other both famous and singular men. The whole legion of Christian soldiers, which lay at Thebes in Egypt, under the Christian captain Mauritius, when they would not obey the emperor's commandment touching the worshipping of images, were tithed to death once, and then again; and at last, through the exhortation of Mauritius,

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died all together like constant martyrs. *Vincentius in speculo, lib. 13. cap. 2.* Likewise at Antino divers Christian soldiers, notwithstanding they were seriously dissuaded, suffered death together, among whom were Afcla, Philemon, and Apollonius, *ibidem cap. 50.* And also in the other parts of Africa and Mauritania was great persecution, as *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6.* Also in Sammium, of which place Chronicon maketh mention, and Sicilia, where were seventy-nine martyrs slain for the profession of Christ. *Henr. de Erfordia.*

Now let us come unto Europe. Nicephorus, *lib. 7. cap. 14.* saith, that, at Nicopolis in Thracia, the martyrs were in most miserable and pitiful wise handled, where Lissias had the execution thereof. In Chalcedon suffered Euphemia, under Priscus the proconsul. *Vincent. lib. 12. cap. 77.*

Henricus de Erfordia saith, that at Rome, Johannes and Crispus, being priests, had the execution of martyrs. And at Beomia, Agricola, and Vitallis. *Vincent. lib. 12. cap. 49.* And at Aquileia the emperor commanded every man to kill the Christians. *Vincent. lib. eodem, cap. 58.* And among those martyrs he maketh mention of Felices and Fortunatus. Reginus also writeth, that, in other places of Italy the persecution became great, as at Florentia, Pergamus, Naples, Campania, Beneventus, at Venusa in Apulia, and in Thufcia; Henricus de Erfordia saith also at Verona. In France doubtless Rectionarus appointed to that office played the cruel hell-hound, of whose great cruelty against the Christians many histories are full. At Mediolanus suffered Victor. And at Massilia, Maximianus set forth his decree, that either they should all do sacrifice unto the gods of the Gentiles, or else be all slain with divers kinds of torments; therefore many martyrs there died for the glory of Christ. Antoninus and Vincentius, *lib. 12. cap. 2.* In Beluacus suffered Lucian.

Vincentius and Reginus write of many places in Spain, where was great persecution, as at Emerita, where suffered Eulalia, of whom more followeth hereafter, and Adula, where also suffered Vincentius, Sabina, and Christina. At Toletum suffered Leucadia the virgin: At Cesarea Augusta, where were put to death eighteen, beside a great number of



of other martyrs which suffered under Decianus the governor, which afflicted with persecution all the coasts of Spain; as saith Vincentius, *lib. 13. cap. 123. 124. 128. 130. 134.* The foresaid Rectionarus made such persecution at Treves near the river of Mosella, that the blood of the Christian men that were slain ran like small brooks, and coloured great and main rivers. Neither yet did this suffice him, but from thence he sent certain horsemen with his letters, commanding them to ride into every place, and charge all such as had taken and apprehended any Christians, that they should immediately put them to death. *Vincent. lib. 13. cap. 136.*

Also Henricus de Erfordia, and Reginus, make mention of great persecution to be at Colonia, where Agrippina and Augusta were martyred, as also in the province of Rhetia.

Beda also saith, that this persecution reached even unto the Britons, in his book *De ratione temporum.* And the chronicle of Martinus, and the noseday of time, do declare, that all the Christians in Britain were utterly destroyed; furthermore, that the kinds of death and punishment were so great and horrible, as no man's tongue is able to express. In the beginning, when the emperor, by his subtilty and wiliness, rather dallied than shewed his rigour, he threatened them with bands and imprisonment. But within a while, when he began to work the matter in good earnest, he devised innumerable sorts of torments and punishments, as whippings and scourgings, rackings, horrible scrapings, sword, fire, and shipboats, wherein a great number being put, were sunk and drowned in the bottom of the sea. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 6. 7. 8.* Also hanging them upon crosses; binding them to the bodies of dead trees, with their heads downward; hanging them by the middles upon gallows, till they died for hunger; throwing them alive to such kind of wild beasts as would devour them, as lions, bears, libbards, and wild bulls, *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 8.*; pricking and thrusting them in with bodkins and talens of beasts, till they were almost dead; lifting them up on high with their heads downward, even as in Thebaide they did unto the women being naked and unclothed, one of their feet tied and lifted on high, and so hanging down with  

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their bodies; which thing to see was very pitiful, with other devised sorts of punishments most tragical, or rather tyrannical, and pitiful to describe; as first the binding of them to trees, and to the boughs thereof; the pulling and tearing afunder of their members and joints, being tied to the boughs and arms of trees, *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 9.*; the mangling of them with axes; the choking of them with smoke by small and soft fires; the dismembering of their hands, ears, and feet, with other joints; as the holy martyrs of Alexandria suffered the scorching and broiling of them with coals, not unto death, but every day renewed. With such kind of torments the martyrs at Antioch were afflicted. But in Pontus, other horrible punishments, and fearful to be heard, did the martyrs of Christ suffer; of which, some had their fingers ends under the nails thrust in with sharp bodkins; some all to be sprinkled with boiling lead, having their most necessary members cut from them; some other suffering most filthy, intollerable, and undurable torments and pains in their bowels and privy members. *Euseb. eodem, cap. 12.*

To conclude: how great the outrage of the persecution which reigned in Alexandria was, and with how many and sundry kinds of new devised punishments the martyrs were afflicted, Phileas the bishop of the Thumitans, a man singularly well learned, hath described in his epistle to the Thumitans, the copy whereof Eusebius hath in his eighth book and tenth chapter, out of the which we mean here briefly to recite somewhat. "Because (saith he) every man might torment the holy martyrs as they listed themselves, some beat them with cudgels, some with rods, some with whips, some with thongs, and some with cords: and this example of beating was in sundry wise executed, and with much cruelty; for some of them, having their hands bound behind their backs, were lifted up upon timber-logs, and with certain instruments their members and joints were stretched forth, whereupon their whole bodies hanging were subject to the will of the tormentors, who were commanded to afflict them with all manner of torments, and not on their sides only, (like as homicides were), but upon their bellies, thighs, and legs, they scratch-  
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ed them with the talens and claws of wild beasts. Some others were seen to hang by one hand upon the engine, whereby they might feel the more grievous pulling out of the rest of their joints and members. Some others were in such sort bound unto pillars, with their faces turned to the wall, having no stay under their feet, and were violently weighed down with the poise of their bodies, that by reason of their strict binding, they being drawn out, might be more grievously tormented. And this suffered they, not only during the time of their examination, and while the sheriff had to do with them, but also the whole day long. And whilst the judge went thus from one to another, he by his authority appointed certain officers to attend upon those he left, that they might not be let down, until either through the intollerableness of the pain, or by the extremity of cold, they being near the point of death, should be let down; and so were they haled upon the ground. And further, they were commanded that they should shew not so much as one spark of mercy or compassion upon us, but so extremely and furiously did they deal with us, as though our souls and bodies should have died together. And therefore yet another torment our adversaries devised, to augment our former plagues. After that they had most lamentably beaten them, they devised moreover a new kind of rack, wherein they lying upright were stretched by both the feet above the fourth stop or hole with sharp shells or shares strowed under them, after a strange kind of engine, to us here unknown. Other some were cast down upon the pavement, where they were oppressed so thick, and so grievously with torments, that it is not almost to be thought what afflictions they suffered.

Thus they lying in pains and torments, some died therewith, not a little shaming and confounding their enemies by their singular patience. Some half dead and half alive were thrust into prison, where shortly after, by pains and wounds of their bodies, they ended their bitter life. Some again, being cured of their wounds by their endurance in prison, were more confirmed; who being put to the choice whether they would come to their cursed sacrifice, and enjoy their wicked liberty, or else sustain the sentence of death, did



did willingly, and without delay, abide the extremity, remembering with themselves what is written in the scriptures, *He that sacrificeth (saith he) to strange gods, shall be exterminated, &c.* Item, *Thou shalt have no strange gods beside me,* &c. Thus much wrote Phileas to the congregation where he was bishop, before he received the sentence of death, being yet in bands; and in the same he exhorteth his brethren constantly to persist after his death in the truth of Christ professed. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 10.*

Sabellicus, in his seventh *Ænead*, *lib. 8.* saith, that that christened man, which tore and pulled down the wicked edict of the emperor in Nicomedia, being stript and beaten that the bones appeared, and after washed in salt and vinegar, was then slain with this cruel kind of torment. But Platina writeth, that Dorotheus and Gorgonius exhorted him to die so constantly.

But as all their torments were for their horribleness marvellous and notable, and therewithal so studiously devised, and no less grievous and sharp; so, notwithstanding, therewith were these martyrs neither dismaid nor overcome, but rather thereby confirmed and strengthened, so merrily and joyfully sustained they whatsoever was put unto them. Eusebius saith, that he himself beheld and saw the huge and great persecution that was done in Thebaide; inso-much that the very swords of the hangmen and persecutors being blunt with the great and often slaughter, they themselves for weariness sat down to rest them, and others were fain to take their places. And yet all this notwithstanding the murdered Christians shewed their marvellous readines, willingness, and divine fortitude, which they were endued with; with stout courage, joy, and smiling, receiving the sentence of death pronounced upon them, and sung even unto the last gasp hymns and psalms to God. So did also the martyrs of Alexandria, as witneseth Phileas above mentioned. The holy martyrs (saith he) keeping Christ in their minds, being led with the love of better rewards, sustained not only at one time whatsoever labour and devised punishments they had to lay upon them; but now also the second time have done the same, and have borne all the menaces of the cruel soldiers, not only in words where-  
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with they threatened them, but also whatsoever in deed and work they could devise to their destruction, and that with most manly stomachs, excluding all fear, with the perfection of their unspeakable love towards Christ, whose great strength and fortitude cannot by words be expressed. And Sulpitius saith, in the second book of his sacred history, that then the Christians with more greedy desire pressed and sought for martyrdom, than now they do desire bishopricks.

Although some there were also, as I have said, that with fear and threatenings, and by their own infirmities, were overcome and went back, *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 4.*; among whom Socrates nameth Miletius, *lib. 1. cap. 6.*; and Athanasius in his second apology, nameth the bishop of Licus, a city in little Egypt, whom Peter the bishop of Alexandria excommunicated, for that in this persecution he sacrificed unto the Gentiles gods. Of the fall of Marcellinus, the bishop of Rome, I will speak afterwards; for he being persuaded by others, and specially of the emperor Dioclesian himself, did sacrifice, whereupon he was excommunicated; but afterwards, he repenting the same, was again received into the congregation, and made martyr, as Platina, and the compiler of the book of the general councils affirm. The number of the martyrs increased daily, sometimes ten, sometimes twenty were slain at once; some whiles thirty, and oftentimes threescore, and other whiles a hundred in one day, men, women, and children, by divers kinds of death. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 9.* Also Damasus, Beda, Orosius, Honorius, and others, do witness, that there were slain in this persecution by the names of martyrs, within the space of thirty days, seventeen thousand persons, besides another great number and multitude that were condemned to the metal mines and quarries with like cruelty.

At Alexandria, with Peter the bishop, of whom I have made mention before, were slain with axes three hundred and above, as Sabellicus declareth. Geron was beheaded at Colonia Agrippina, with three hundred of his fellows, as saith Henricus de Erfordia. Mauritius the captain of Christian religion, with his fellows, six thousand six hundred sixty and six. Victor, in the city of Troy, now called Xanthus, with his fellows, three hundred and threescore

score were slain, as saith Otto Phrisingenſis, *lib. 2. cap. 45.* Reginus reciteth the names of many other martyrs, to the number of one hundred and twenty.

And for ſo much as mention here hath been made of Mauritius and Victor, the particular deſcription of the ſame hiſtory I thought here to inſert, taken out of Ado and other ſtory-writers, as enſueth.

Mauritius came out of Syria into France and Italy, being captain of the band of the Theban ſoldiers, to the number of ſix thouſand ſix hundred and threſcore, being ſent for of Maximianus, to go againſt the rebellious Bangandes, but rather, as it ſhould ſeem, by the reaſon of the tyrant, which thought he might better in theſe quarters uſe his tyranny upon the Chriſtians, than in the eaſt part. Theſe Thebans, with Mauritius the captain, after that they had entered into Rome, were there of Marcellus, the bleſſed biſhop, confirmed in the faith, promiſing by oath, that they would rather be ſlain of their enemies, than forſake that faith which they had received; who followed the emperor's hoſt through the Alps even into France. At that time the Ceſarians were encamped not far from the town called Ottodor, where Maximianus offered ſacrifice to his devils, and called all the ſoldiers both of the eaſt and weſt to the ſame, ſtrictly charging them by the altars of his gods, that they would fight againſt thoſe rebels the Bangandes, and perſecute the Chriſtian enemies of the emperor's gods. Which his commandment was ſhewed to the Thebans hoſt, which were alſo encamped about the river of Rhode, and in a place that was named Agawne; but to Ottodor they would in no wiſe come, for that every man did certainly appoint and perſuade with themſelves, rather in that place to die, than either to ſacrifice to the gods, or bear armour againſt the Chriſtians. Which thing indeed, very ſtoutly and valiantly they affirmed, upon their oath before taken to Maximianus, when he ſent for them. Wherewith the tyrant, being wrathful and all moved, commanded every tenth man of that whole band to be put to the ſword; whereto ſtrivingly and with great rejoicing they committed their necks. To which notable thing and great force of faith, Mauritius himſelf was a great encourager, who



who by and by, with a most grave oration, exhorted and animated his foldiers both to fortitude and constancy. Which, being again called of the emperor, answered in this wise, saying, "We are, O emperor, your foldiers; but yet also, to speak freely, the servants of God. We owe to thee service of war, to him innocency: of thee we receive for our travel, wages; of him the beginning of life. But in this we may in no wise obey thee, O emperor, to deny God our author and Lord; and not only ours, but your Lord likewise, will ye nill ye. If we be not so extremely enforced that we offend him, doubtless, as we have hitherto before, we will yet obey you; but otherwise we will rather obey him than you. We offer here our hands against any other enemies; but to defile our hands with the blood of innocents, that we may not do. These right hands of ours have skill to fight against the wicked and true enemies; but to spoil and murder the godly and citizens, they have no skill at all. We have in remembrance how we took armour in hand, for the defence of the citizens, and not against them. We fought always for justice sake, piety, and for the health of innocents. These have been always the rewards of our perils and travel. We have fought in the quarrel of faith, which in no wise we can keep to you, if we do not shew the same to our God. We first sware upon the sacraments of our God, then afterward to the king: and do you think the second will avail us, if we break the first? By us you would plague the Christians, to do which feat we are only commanded by you. We are here ready to confess God the author of all things, and believe in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. We see before our eyes our fellows, and partakers of our labours and travels, to be put to the sword, and we sprinkled with their blood; of which our most blessed companions and brethren the end and death we have not bewailed nor mourned, but rather have been glad, and have rejoiced thereat, for that they have been counted worthy to suffer for the Lord their God. The extreme necessity of death cannot move us against your majesty, neither yet any desperation, O emperor, which is wont in venturous affairs to do much, shall arm us against you. Behold, here we cast down our weapons, and

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resist not, for that we had rather to be killed, than kill, and guiltless to die, than guilty to live. Whatsoever more ye will command, appoint, and enjoin us, we are here ready to suffer, yea, both fire and sword, and whatsoever other torments. We confess ourselves to be Christians, we cannot persecute Christians, nor will do sacrifice to your devilish idols."

With which their answer the king being altogether incensed and moved, commanded the second time the tenth man of them that were left to be in like case murdered. That cruelty also being accomplished, at length, when the Christian soldiers would in no wise condescend unto his mind, he set upon them with his whole host, both footmen and also horsemen, and charged them to kill them all. Who with all force set upon them, they making no resistance, but throwing down their armour, yielded their lives to the persecutors, and offered to them their naked bodies.

Victor at the same time was not of that band, nor yet then any soldier; but being an old soldier, was dismissed for his age. At which time he coming suddenly upon them, as they were banqueting and making merry with the spoils of the holy martyrs, was bidden to sit down with them; who first asking the cause of that their so great rejoicing, and understanding the truth thereof, detested the guests, and refused to eat with them. And then being demanded of them whether haply he were a Christian or not? openly confessed and denied not but that he was a Christian, and ever would be. And thereupon they rushing upon him, killed him, and made him partner of the like martyrdom and honour.

Beda in his history writeth, that this persecution being under Dioclesian, endured unto the seventh year of Constantinus. And Eusebius, *lib. cap. 6.* saith, that it lasted until the tenth year of Constantinus. It was not yet one year from the day in which Dioclesian and Maximinian, joining themselves together, began their persecution, when that they saw the number of the Christians rather to increase than to diminish, notwithstanding all the cruelty that ever they could shew, and now were out of all hope for the utter rooting out of them. Which thing was the cause of their first enterprise;

terprise; and having now even their fill of blood, and loathing, as it were, the shedding thereof, they ceased at the last of their own accord to put any more Christians to death. But yet of a great multitude they did thrust out their right eyes, and maimed their left legs at the ham with a searing iron, condemning them to the mines of metals, not so much for the use of their labour, as for the desire of afflicting them. And this was the clemency and release of the cruelty of those princes, which said that it was not meet that the cities should be defiled with the blood of citizens, and to make the emperor's highness to be distained with the name of cruelty, but to shew his princely beneficence and liberality to all men. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 10.*

When Dioclesian and Maximinian had reigned together emperors one and twenty years, (Nicephorus saith two and twenty years), at length Dioclesian put himself from his imperial dignity at Nicomedia, and lived at Salona, Maximinian at Mediolanum, and led both of them a private life in the three hundred and ninth year after Christ. This strange and marvellous alteration gave occasion, (and so it came to pass), that, within short space after, there were in the Roman commonwealth many emperors at one time.

In the beginning of this persecution, you heard how Dioclesian, being made emperor, took to him Maximinian; also how these two, governing as emperors together, chose out other two Cæsars under them, to wit, Galerius Maximinus, and Constantius the father of Constantine the Great. Thus then Dioclesian reigning with Maximinian, in the nineteenth year of his reign began his furious persecution against the Christians, whose reign after the same continued not long. For so it pleased God to put such a snaffle in the tyrant's mouth, that within two years after, he caused both him and Maximinian (for what cause he knoweth) to give over their imperial function, and so to remain not as emperors any more, but as private persons. So that they being now displaced and dispossessed, the imperial dominion remained with Constantius and Galerius Maximinus; which two divided the whole monarchy between them, so that Maximinus should govern the east countries, and Constantius the west parts. But Constantius as a modest prince,



only contented with the imperial title, refused Italy and Afric, contenting himself only with France, Spain, and Britain. Wherefore Galerius Maximinus chose to him his two sons, Maximinus and Severus. Likewise Constantius took Constantinus his son Cesar under him. In the meantime, while Maximinus with his two Cesars were in Asia, the Roman soldiers set up for their emperor Maxentius, the son of Maximinian, who had before deposed himself. Against whom Maximinus the emperor of the east sent his son Severus; which Severus was slain in the same voyage of Maxentius; in whose place then Maximinus took Licinius. And these were the emperors and Cesars, which succeeding after Dioclesian and Maximinian, prosecuted the rest of that persecution, which Dioclesian and Maximinian before begun, during near the space of seven or eight years, which was to the year of our Lord three hundred and eighteen; save only that Constantius, with his son Constantinus, was no great doer therein, but rather a maintainer and a supporter of the Christians. Which Constantius, surnamed Clorus for his paleness, was the son of Eutropius, a man of great nobility of the Roman nation, as Letus affirmeth. He came of the line of Eneas and Claudia, the daughter of Claudius Augustus. This man had not the desire of great and mighty dominions, and therefore parted he the empire with Galerius, and would rule but in France, Britain, and Spain, refusing the other kingdoms for the troublesome and difficult government of the same. Otherwise he was a prince, as Eutropius maketh description of him, very excellent, civil, meek, gentle, liberal, and desirous to do good unto those that had any private authority under him. And as Cyrus once said, "That he got treasure enough, when he made his friends rich;" even so it is said, that Constantius would oftentimes say, that it were better that his subjects had treasure, than he to have it in his treasure-house. Also he was by nature sufficed with a little, insomuch that he used to eat and drink in earthen vessels, (which thing was counted in Agathocles the Sicilian a great commendation); and if at any time cause required to garnish his table, he would send for plate and other furniture to his friends. To these virtues he added yet a more worthy ornament,

ment, that is, devotion, love, and affection towards the word of God, as Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 13.* affirmeth. After which virtues ensued great peace and tranquillity in all his provinces. By which word he being guided, neither levied any wars contrary to piety and Christian religion, neither aided he any other that did the same, neither destroyed he the churches, but commanded that the Christians should be preserved and defended, and kept them safe from all contumelious injuries. And when that in the other jurisdictions of the empire, the congregations were molested with persecution, as Sozomenus declareth, *lib. 1. cap. 6.* he only gave licence unto the Christians to live after their accustomed manner. This wonderful act of his following, besides others, doth shew that he was a sincere worshipper, and of the Christian religion.

Those which bare the chief offices amongst the Ethnics, drove out of the emperor's court all the godly Christians: whereupon this ensued, that the emperors themselves, at the last, were destitute of help, when such were driven away, which dwelling in their courts, and living a godly life, poured out their prayers unto God for the prosperous estate and health both of the empire and emperor. Constantius therefore, minding at a certain time to try what sincere and good Christians he had yet in his court, called together all his officers and servants in the same, feigning himself to chuse out such as would do sacrifice to devils, and that those only should dwell there and keep their offices, and that those which would refuse to do the same, should be thrust out and banished the court. At this appointment, all the courtiers divided themselves into companies; the emperor marked which were the constantest and godliest from the rest. And when some said they would willingly do sacrifice, other some openly and boldly denied to do the same; then the emperor sharply rebuked those which were so ready to do sacrifice, and judged them as false traitors unto God, accounting them unworthy to be in his court which were such traitors to God; and forthwith commanded that they only should be banished the same. But greatly he commended them which refused to do sacrifice, and confessed God, affirming that they only were worthy to be  
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about a prince; forthwith commanding that thenceforth they should be the trusty counsellors and defenders both of his person and kingdom; saying thus much more, That they only were worthy to be in office, whom he might make account of as his assured friends; and that he meant to have them in more estimation, than the substance he had in his treasury. Eusebius maketh mention hereof in his first book of the life of Constantinus, and also Sozomenus, *lib. 1. cap. 6.*

With this Constantius was joined (as hath been afore-said) Galerius Maximinus, a man, as Eutropius affirmeth, very civil, and a passing good soldier; furthermore, a favourer of wise and learned men, of a quiet disposition, not rigorous, but in his drunkenness, whereof he would soon after repent him, as Victor writeth: whether he meaneth Maximinus the father, or Maximinus his son, it is uncertain. But Eusebius far otherwise describeth the conditions of him, *lib. 8. cap. 1.* For he saith he was of a tyrannical disposition; the fearfulest man that might be, and curious in all magical superstition; insomuch, that without the divinations and answers of devils, he durst do nothing at all; and therefore he gave great offices and dignities to enchanters. Furthermore, that he was an exactor and extortioner of the citizens, liberal to those that were flatterers, given to surfeiting and riot, a great drinker of wine, and in his furious drunkenness most like a mad man, a ribald, and adulterer, which came to no city, but he ravished virgins, and defiled mens wives. To conclude; he was so great an idolater, that he built up temples in every city, and repaired those that were fallen in great decay: and he chose out the most worthy of his political magistrates to be the idols priests, and devised that they should execute that their office with great authority and dignity, and also with warlike pomp. But unto Christian piety and religion, he was most incensive, and in the east churches exercised cruel persecution, and used as executioners of the same Pencetius, Quintianus, and Theotechnus, beside others.

Notwithstanding, he was at length revoked from his cruelty, by the just judgment and punishment of God. For he was suddenly vexed with a fatal disease, most filthy and desperate;



desperate; which disease to describe was very strange, taking the first beginning in his flesh outwardly, from thence it proceeded more and more to the inward parts of his body. For in the privy members of his body, there happened unto him a sudden putrefaction, and after in the bottom of the same a botchy corrupt bile, with a fistula consuming and eating up his entrails, out of the which came swarming forth an innumerable multitude of lice, with such a pestiferous stink, that no man could abide him; and so much more, for that all the grossness of his body, by abundance of meat before he fell sick, was turned also into fat; which fat, now putrefied and stinking, was so ugly and horrible, that none that came to him could abide the sight thereof. By reason whereof, the physicians which had him in cure, not able to abide the intolerable stink, some of them were commanded to be slain. Other some, because they could not heal him, being so swoln and past hope of cure, were also cruelly put to death. At length, being put in remembrance that his disease was sent of God, he began to forethink the wickedness that he had done against the saints of God, and so coming again to himself, first confesseth to God all his offences, then calling them unto him which were about him, forthwith commanded all men to cease from the persecutions of the Christians; requiring, moreover, that they should set up his imperial proclamations, for the restoring and re-edifying of their temples; and that they would obtain this of the Christians in their assemblies, (which without all fear and doubt they might be bold to make), that they would devoutly pray to their God for the emperor. Then forthwith was the persecution stayed, and the imperial proclamations in every city were set up, containing the retraction or countermand of those things which against the Christians were before decreed, the copy whereof ensueth.

“Amongst other things, which for the benefit and commodity of the commonwealth we established, we commanded to reform all things, according to the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans, and also to use this policy, that the Christians, which had forsaken the religion of their forefathers, should be brought again to the right way. For  
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such fantastical singularity was amongst them, that those things which their elders had received and allowed, they rejected and disallowed, devising every man such laws as they thought good, and observed the same, assembling in divers places great multitudes of people.

Therefore, when our foresaid decree was proclaimed, many there were that felt the penalty thereof, and many being troubled therefor, suffered many kinds of death. And because we see yet that there be many which persevere in the same, which neither give due worship unto the celestial gods, neither receive the God of the Christians, we having respect to our accustomed benignity, wherewith we are wont to shew favour unto all men, think good in this cause also to extend our clemency, that the Christians may be again tolerated, and appoint them places where again they may meet together, so that they do nothing contrary to public order and discipline. By another epistle we mean to prescribe unto the judges, what shall be convenient for them to do. Wherefore, according as this our bountiful clemency deserveth, let them make intercession to God for our health, commonwealth, and for themselves; that in all places the state of the commonwealth may be preserved, and that they themselves may be able safely to live within their bounds." *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. ult.*

But one of his inferior officers, whose name was also Maximinus, was not well pleased when this countermand was published throughout all Asia; and the provinces where he had to do. Yet he being qualified by this example, that it was not convenient for him to repugn the pleasure of those princes which had the chief authority, as Constantinus and Maximinus, set forth of himself no edict touching the same; but commanded his officers, in the presence of others, that they should somewhat stay from the persecution of the Christians; of which commandment of the inferior Maximinus, each of them gave intelligence unto their fellows by their letters. But Sabinus, which then amongst them all had the chiefeest office and dignity, to the substitutes of every country wrote by his letters the emperor's pleasure in this wise.

"The majesty of our most gracious and sovereign lords  
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the emperors, hath lately decreed, with special diligence and devotion, to induce all men to an uniform life, so that they, which seemed to dissent from the Roman custom by a strange manner of living, should exhibit to the immortal gods their due and proper worship: but the wilful and obstinate mind of divers so much and so continually resisted the same, that by no lawful means they might be revoked from their purpose, neither made afraid by any terror or punishment. Because therefore it so came to pass, that by this means many put themselves in peril and jeopardy; the majesty of our sovereign lords the emperors, according to their noble piety, considering that it was far from the meaning of their princely majesties, that such things should be, whereby so many men and much people should be destroyed, gave me in charge, that with diligence I should write unto you, that, if any of the Christians from henceforth fortune to be taken in the exercise of their religion, in no wise ye molest the same, neither for that cause you do judge any man worthy of punishment; for that in all this time it hath evidently appeared, that by no means they might be allured from such wilfulness. It is therefore requisite, that your wisdom write unto the questors, captains, and constables of every city and village, that they may know it not to be lawful for them, or any of them, to do contrary to the prescript of this commandment, neither that they presume to attempt the same." *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 1.*

The governors therefore of every province, supposing this to be the determinate pleasure (and not feigned) of the emperor, did first advertise thereof the rustical and Pagan multitude; after that they released and set at liberty all such prisoners as were condemned to the metal mines, and to perpetual imprisonment for their faith, thinking thereby (where indeed they were deceived) that the doing thereof would please the emperor. This therefore seemed to them as unlooked for, and as light to travellers in a dark night. They gather themselves together in every city, they call their synods and councils, and much marvel at the sudden change and alteration. The infidels themselves extol the only and true God of the Christians. The Christians receive again all their former liberties; and such as fell a-



way before, in the time of persecution, repent themselves, and, after penance done, they returned again to the congregation. Now the Christians rejoiced in every city, praising God with hymns and psalms. *Eusebius ibidem*. This was a marvellous sudden alteration of the church, from a most unhappy state into a better. But scarce suffered Maximinus the tyrant the same six months unviolated to continue; for whatsoever seemed to make for the subversion of the same peace, (yet scarcely hatched), that did he only meditate. And first of all he took from the Christians all liberty and leave for them to assemble and congregate in church-yards, under a certain colour. After that he sent certain miscreants unto the Athenians, to solicit them against the Christians, and to provoke them to ask of him, as a recompence and great reward, that he would not suffer any Christian to inhabit in their country; and amongst them was one Theotechnus, a most wicked miscreant, and enchanter, and a most deadly enemy against the Christians. He first made the way whereby the Christians were put out of credit, and accused to the emperor; to which fraud also he erected a certain idol of Jupiter to be worshipped of the enchanters and conjurers, and mingled the same worship with ceremonies, full of deceivable witchcraft. Lastly, he caused the same idol to give this sound out of his mouth, that is, Jupiter commandeth the Christians to be banished out of the city and suburbs of the same, as enemies unto him. And the same sentence did the rest of the governors of the provinces publish against the Christians. And thus at length persecution began to kindle against them. Maximinus appointed and instituted high priests and bishops in every city to offer sacrifice unto idols, and inveigled all those that were in great offices under him, that they should not only cease to pleasure them and to do for them, but also that they should, with new devised accusations against them, at their pleasure, put as many to death as by any means they might. They also did counterfeit certain practices of Pilate against our Saviour Christ, full of blasphemy, and sent the same into all the empire of Maximinus by their letters; commanding that the same should be published and set up in every city and suburbs of the same; and that they should  
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be delivered to the school-masters, to cause their scholars to learn by rote the same.

After that, one named *Præfectus castrorum*, whom the Romans do call captain, allured certain light women, partly by fear, and partly by punishment, dwelling at Damascus in Phenicia, and taken out of the court wherein they were accused, that they should openly say in writing, that they were once Christians, and that they knew what wicked and lascivious acts the Christians were wont to execute amongst themselves upon the Sunday, and what other things they thought good to make more of their own head, to the slander of the Christians. The captain sheweth unto the emperor their words, as though it had been so indeed; and the emperor by and by commanded the same to be published throughout every city. Furthermore, they did hang up in the midst of every city (which was never done before) the emperor's edicts against the Christians, graven in tables of brass. And the children in the schools, with great noise and clapping of hands, did every day resound the contumelious blasphemies of Pilate unto Jesus, and what other things soever were devised of the magistrates, after a most despiteful manner. *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.* And this is the copy of the edict, which Maximinus caused to be fastened to pillars, fraught with all arrogant and insolent hate against God and Christ.

“ The weak and imbecile rebellion of man's mind (all obscurity and blindness of ignorance set apart, which hitherto hath wrapped the minds of impious and miserable men in the pernicious darkness of ignorance) is now at the length able to discern, that the same is governed, as also corroborated, by the providence of the immortal gods, the lovers of virtue; which thing, how acceptable it is to us, how pleasant and grateful, and how much proof the same hath declared of your well-disposed willing minds, is incredible to be told; although this was not unknown before, with what diligence and devotion ye served the immortal gods, whose wonderful and constant faith is not known by bare and naked words, but by your worthy and notable deeds. Wherefore worthily is your city called the habitation and seat of the immortal gods; and by many examples

it appeareth, that the same flourisheth, and prospereth by the presence of the celestial gods. For behold, your city not regarding your private businesses, nor esteeming that which should have been for the special commodity thereof, when it perceived that cursed vanity to begin again to creep, and as a fire negligently quenched, when the dead brands thereof began to kindle, and make a great flame, by and by without delay, ye having recourse unto our piety, as unto the metropolitan of all divine worship and religion, craved remedy and help; which wholesome mind, for your piety's sake, it is most manifest that the gods have endued you with. Therefore he, even that most mighty Jupiter, I say, which preserveth your most famous city, to that intent he might deliver and make free your country gods, your wives and children, your household gods and houses, from all detestable corruption, hath inspired you with this wholesome and willing mind, shewing and declaring how worthy, notable, and healthful a thing it is, to worship and to sacrifice to the immortal gods: for who is so void of reason and understanding, that knoweth not that this thing happeneth unto us by the careful study of the goodness of our gods, that the ground denieth not to give her timely increase, nor maketh frustrate the husbandman's hope, nor that wicked war dare shew her face upon the earth, nor that the corruption of the air is now cause of pestilence, neither that the sea swelleth with immoderate winds, neither that sudden storms are cause of hurtful tempest; to conclude, that the ground, which is as the nurse and mother of all things, is not swallowed up of her deep chaps and gapings, by terrible earthquakes; neither that the hills, made level with the earth, are not with gaping clefts devoured? all which evils, and greater than these, before this time to have happened, every man knoweth. And all these mischiefs came upon us for the pernicious error's sake of the extreme folly of those wicked men the Christians, when filthiness itself (as I may call it) so occupied their minds, and over-ran the world. Let them behold the fields now all about full of corn, and overflown, as it were, with ears of corn. Let them view the pleasant meadows clothed with flowers, and moistened with showers from heaven, and also the pleasant  
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and temperate weather. Therefore let all men rejoice, that by your piety, sacrifices, and worshipping, the majesty of the most stern god of battle Mars, is appeased, and that therefore we enjoy pleasant and firm peace. And how many soever have left that blind error and straying of the Christians unfeignedly, and be of a better mind, let them especially rejoice, as men delivered out of a sudden great tempest, and from a grievous disease, and have afterward obtained a delectable and pleasant life. For doubtless if they had remained in that execrable vanity, far off had they been chased from your city and suburbs of the same, (according to your desire), that your city by that means, according to your commendable diligence, cleansed from all impurity and impiety, may offer sacrifices according to the meaning of the same, with due reverence of the immortal gods. And that you may perceive in how good part your supplication was unto us, (yea, unasked and undesired), we are most willing and ready to further your honest endeavours, and grant unto you for your devotion, whatsoever ye ask of our magnificence. And that this thing may be accomplished, forthwith ask and have. And this thing with all speed endeavour you to obtain, which shall be a perpetual testimony of piety exhibited of your city to the immortal gods, and shall be a precedent to your children and posterity, and withal you shall obtain of us, for this your willing desire of reformation, condign and worthy rewards." *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 7.*

Thus came it to pass, that at the length persecution was as great as ever it was, and the magistrates of every province were very disdainful against the Christians, which condemned some to death, and some to exile. Among whom they condemned three Christians at Emisa in Phenicia, with whom Sylvanus the bishop, a very old man, being forty years in the ecclesiastical function, was condemned to death. At Nicomedia, Lucianus, the elder of Antioch, brought thither, after he had exhibited to the emperor his apology concerning the doctrine of the Christians, was cast in prison, and after put to death. In Amaſea, a city of Cappadocia, Bringes, the lieutenant of Maximinus, had at that time the executing of that persecution.

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At Alexandria, Petrus, a most worthy bishop, was beheaded; with whom many other Egyptian bishops also died. *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 7. Niceph. lib. 7. cap. 44.* Quirinus, the bishop of Scescanus, having a handmill tied about his neck, was thrown headlong from the bridge into the flood, and there a long while floated above the water; and when he opened his mouth to speak to the lookers on, that they should not be dismayed with that his punishment, was with much ado drowned. *Chron. Euseb.* At Rome died Marcellus the bishop, as saith Platina, also Timotheus the elder, with many other bishops and priests were martyred. To conclude, many in sundry places every where were martyred, whose names the book entitled *Fasciculus temporum* declareth, as Victorinus, Symphorianus, Castorius with his wife, Castulus, Cesarius, Mennas, Nobilis, Dorotheus, Gorgonius, Petrus, and other innumerable martyrs, Erasmus, Bonifacius, Juliana, Cosmas, Damianus, Basilinus, with seven others. Dorothea, Theophilus, Theodosia, Vitalis, Agricola, Acha, Philemon, Hireneus, Januarius, Festus, Desiderius, Gregorius, Spoletanus, Agapes, Chionia, Hirenea, Theodora, and two hundred threescore and ten other martyrs. Florianus, Primus and Felicianus, Vitus and Modestus, Crescentia, Albinus, Rogatianus, Donatianus, Pancratius, Catharina, Margareta, Lucia the virgin, and Antheus the king, with many thousand martyrs more. Simplicius, Faustinus, Beatrix, Panthaleon, Georgius, Justus, Leocandia, Anthonia, and others more (to an infinite number), suffered martyrdom in this persecution, whose names God hath written in the book of life. Also Felix, Victor with his parents, Lucia the widow, Gemenianus, with threescore and nineteen others. Sabinus, Anastasia, Chrysogonus, Felix and Audactus, Adrianus, Natholia, Eugenia. Agnes also, when she was but thirteen years old, was martyred. *Eusebius, lib. 8. cap. 15.* rehearseth these kinds of torments and punishments, that is to say, fire, wild beasts, the sword, crucifyings, the bottom of the sea; the cutting and burning of members, the thrusting out of eyes, dismembering of the whole body, hunger, imprisonment, and whatsoever other cruelty the magistrates could devise. All which notwithstanding,

standing, the godly ones, rather than that they would do sacrifice, as they were bid, manfully endured. Neither were the women any thing at all behind them; for they, being enticed to the filthy use of their bodies, rather suffered banishment, or willingly killed themselves. Neither yet could the Christians live safely in the wilderness, but were fetched even from thence to death and torments, insomuch that this was a more grievous persecution under Maximinus the tyrant, than was the former cruel persecution under Maximianus the prince. *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 6.*

And for so much as ye have heard the cruel edict of Maximinus proclaimed against the Christians, graven in brass, which he thought perpetually should endure, to the abolishing of Christ and his religion; now mark again the great handy-work of God, which immediately fell upon the same, checking the proud presumption of the tyrant, proving all to be false and contrary that in the brazen proclamation was contained. For where the foresaid edict boasted so much of the prosperity and plenty of all things, in the same time of this persecution of the Christians, suddenly besel such unseasonable drought, with famine and pestilence among the people, besides also the wars with the Armenians, that all was found untrue that he had bragged so much of before. By reason of which famine and pestilence the people were greatly consumed, insomuch that one measure of wheat was sold for two thousand and five hundred pieces of money of Athens coin; by reason whereof innumerable died in the cities, but many more in the country and villages, so that most part of the husbandmen and countrymen died with the famine and pestilence. Divers there were which bringing out their best treasure, were glad to give it for any kind of sustenance, were it never so little. Others selling away their possessions, fell by reason thereof to extreme poverty and beggary. Certain eating grasse, and feeding on other unwholesome herbs, were faine to relieve themselves with such food as did hurt and poison their bodies. Also a number of women in the cities, being brought to extreme misery and penury, were constrained to depart the city, and fall to begging through the country. Some others were weak and faint, (as images  
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without breath), wandering up and down, and not able to stand for feebleness, fell down in the middle of the streets, and holding up their hands most pitiful, cried for some scraps or fragments of bread to be given them, and being at the last gasp, ready to give up the ghost, and not able to utter any other words, yet cried out that they were hungry. Of the richer sort divers there were, who being weary with the number of beggars and askers, after they had bestowed largely upon them, became hard-hearted, fearing lest they should fall into the same misery themselves, as they which begged. By reason whereof, the marketplace, streets, lanes, and alleys, lay full of dead and naked bodies, being cast out and unburied, to the pitiful and grievous beholding of them that saw them; wherefore many were eaten of dogs, for which cause they that lived fell to the killing of dogs, lest they running mad, should fall upon them, and kill them. *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 8.*

In like manner the pestilence scattering through all houses and ages of men, did no less consume them, especially those which through plenty of victuals escaped famine. Wherefore the rich princes and presidents, and others innumerable of the magistrates, being the more apt to receive the infection, by reason of their plenty, were quickly dispatched, and turned up their heels. Thus the miserable multitude being consumed with famine and with pestilence, all places were full of mourning, neither was there any thing else seen, but wailing and weeping in every corner. So that death, what for famine and pestilence, in short time brake up and consumed whole households, two or three dead bodies being borne out together from one house to one funeral.

These were the rewards of the vain brags of Maximinus and his edicts, which he did publish in all towns and cities against us; when it was evident to all men, how diligent and charitable the Christians were to them all in this their miserable extremity. For they only, in all this time of distress, shewing compassion upon them, travelled every day, some in curing the sick, and some in burying the dead, which otherwise of their own sort were forsaken. Other some of the Christians calling and gathering the multitude

titude together, which were in jeopardy of famine, distributed bread unto them, whereby they ministered occasion to all men to glorify the God of the Christians, and to confess them to be the true worshippers of God, as appeared by their works. By the means and reason hereof, the great God and defender of the Christians, who before had shewed his anger and indignation against all men, for their wrongful afflicting of us, opened again unto us the comfortable light of his providence, so that by means thereof peace fell unto us, as light unto them that sit in darkness, to the great admiration of all men, which easily perceive God himself to be a perpetual director of our doings, who many times chasteneth his people with calamities for a time to exercise them, but after sufficient correction again sheweth himself merciful and favourable to them which with trust call upon him.

By the narration of these things heretofore premised, taken out of the story of Eusebius, like as it is manifest to see, so it is wonderful to mark and note, how those counsels and rages of the Gentiles atchieved against Christ and his Christians, when they seemed most sure against them, were most against themselves; and whereby they thought most to confound the church and religion of Christ, the same turned most to their own confusion, and to the profit and praise of the Christians, (God of his marvellous wisdom so ordering and disposing the end of things). For where the brazen edict of the emperor promised temperate weather, God sent drought; where it promised plenty, God immediately sent upon them famine and penury; where it promised health, God struck them even upon the same, with grievous pestilence, and with other more calamities, in such sort that the most relief they had, was chiefly by the Christians, to the great praise both of them, and to the honour of our God.

Thus most plainly and evidently was then verified the true promise of Christ to his church, affirming and assuring us, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church builded upon his faith; as sufficiently may appear by these ten persecutions above specified and described. Wherein as no man can deny, but that Satan and his malignant world

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have assayed the uttermost of their power and might to overthrow the church of Jesus; so must all men needs grant, that read these stories, that when Satan and the gates of hell have done their worst, yet have they not prevailed against this mount of Zion, nor ever shall. For else what was here to be thought, where so many emperors and tyrants together, Dioclesian, Maximinian, Galerius, Maximinus, Severus, Maxentius, Licinius, with their captains and officers, were let loose, like so many lions, upon a scattered and unarmed flock of sheep, intending nothing else but the utter subversion of all Christianity, and especially also when laws were set up in brass against the Christians, as a thing perpetually to stand; what was here to be looked for, but a final desolation of the name and religion of Christians? But what followed, partly ye have heard, partly more is to be marked, as in the story followeth.

I shewed before how Maxentius, and the son of Maximinian, was set up at Rome by the pretorian soldiers to be emperor. Whereunto the senate, although they were not consenting, yet for fear they were not resisting. Maximinian his father, who had before deprived himself with Dioclesian, hearing of this, took heart again to him, to resume his dignity, and so laboured to persuade Dioclesian also to do the same: but when he could not move him thereunto, he repaireth to Rome, thinking to wrest the empire out of his son's hands. But when the soldiers would not suffer that, of a crafty purpose he flieth to Constantinus in France, under pretence to complain of Maxentius his son, but in very deed to kill Constantinus. Notwithstanding that conspiracy being detected by Fausta the daughter of Maximinian, whom Constantinus had married, so was Constantinus through the grace of God preserved, and Maximinian retired back. In the which his flight by the way he was apprehended, and so put to death. And this is the end of Maximinian.

Now let us return to Maxentius again, who all this while reigned at Rome with tyranny and wickedness intolerable, much like to another Pharaoh or Nero: for he slew the most part of his noblemen, and took from them their goods; and sometime in his rage he would destroy great multitudes  
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of the people of Rome by his soldiers, as Eusebius declareth, *lib. 8. cap. 14.* Also he left no mischievous nor lascivious act unattempted, but was the utter enemy of all womenly chastity, which used to send the honest wives, whom he had adulterated, with shame and dishonesty unto their husbands, (being worthy senators), after that he had ravished them. He abstained from no adulterous act, but was inflamed with the unquenchable lust of deflouring of women. Letus declareth, that he being at a time far in love with a noble and chaste gentlewoman of Rome, sent unto her such courtiers of his, as were meet for that purpose, whom also he had in greater estimation than any others, and with such was wont to consult about matters for the commonwealth. These first fell upon her husband, and murdered him within his own house; then when they could by no means, neither with fear of the tyrant, or with threatening of death, pull her away from him; at length she being a Christian, desired leave of them to go into her chamber, and after her prayers she would accomplish that which they requested. And when she had gotten into her chamber, under this pretence, she killed herself. But the courtiers when they saw that the woman tarried so long, they being displeased therewith, brake open the doors, and found her there lying dead. Then returned they and declared this matter to the emperor, who was so far past shame, that, instead of repentance, he was the more set on fire in attempting the like.

He was also much addict to the art-magical, which to execute he was more fit than for the imperial dignity. Also sometime he would rip women when they were in labour, and would search the place where the infant lay, being born a little before. Often he would invoke devils in a secret manner, and by the answers of them he sought to break the wars, which he knew Constantinus and Licinius prepared against him. And to the end he might the rather perpetrate his mischievous and wicked attempts, which in his ungracious mind he had conceived, according to his purpose, in the beginning of his reign he feigned himself to be a favourer of the Christians. In which thing doing, thinking to make the people of Rome his friends, he com-

manded that they should cease from persecuting of the Christians. And he himself in the mean season abstained from no contumelious vexation of them, till that he began at the last to shew himself an open persecutor of them: at which time, as Zonaras writeth, he most cruelly raged against the Christians thereabouts, vexing them with all manner of injuries. Which thing he in no less wise did than Maximinus, as Eusebius, *lib. 8. cap. 15.* seemeth to affirm. And Platina declareth in the life of Marcellus the bishop, that he banished a certain noblewoman of Rome, because she gave her goods to the church.

Thus, by the grievous tyranny and unspeakable wickedness of this Maxentius, the citizens and senators of Rome, being much grieved and oppressed, sent their complaints with letters unto Constantinus, with much suit and most hearty petitions, desiring him to help and release their country and city of Rome: who hearing and understanding their miserable and pitiful state, and grieved therewith not a little, first sendeth by letters to Maxentius, desiring and exhorting him to refrain his corrupt doings, and great cruelty. But when no letters nor exhortations would prevail, at the length pitying the woful case of the Romans, gathered together his power and army in Britain and France, therewith to repress the violent rage of that tyrant. Thus Constantinus sufficiently appointed with strength of men, but especially with strength of God, entered his journey coming towards Italy, which was about the last year of the persecution, in the year of our Lord three hundred and eighteen. Maxentius understanding of the coming of Constantinus, and trusting more to his devilish art of magic, than to the good-will of his subjects, which he little deserved, durst not shew himself out of the city, nor encounter with him in the open field, but with privy garri- sons laid in wait for him by the way, in sundry straits as he should come. With whom Constantinus had divers skirmishes, and by the power of the Lord did ever vanquish them, and put them to flight. Notwithstanding Constantinus yet was in no great comfort, but in great care and dread in his mind, (approaching now near unto Rome), for the magical charms and forceries of Maxentius, where-  
with

with he had vanquished before Severus sent by Galerius against him, as hath been declared, which made also Constantinus the more afraid. Wherefore being in great doubt and perplexity in himself, and revolving many things in his mind, what help he might have against the operations of his charming, which used to cut women great with child, to take his devilish charms by the entrails of the infants, with such other like feats of devilishness which he practised; these things (I say) Constantinus doubting and revolving in his mind, in his journey drawing toward the city, and casting up his eyes many times to heaven, in the south part, about the going down of the sun, saw a great brightness in heaven, appearing in the similitude of a cross, with certain stars of equal bigness, giving this inscription like Latin letters, *IN HOC VINCE*, that is, In this overcome. *Euseb. de vita Constant. lib. 2. Niceph. lib. 7. cap. 29. Eutrop. lib. 11. Sozom. lib. 1. cap. 3. Socrat. lib. 1. cap. 2. Ursperg. Chron. Paul. Diacon. lib. 11.* This miraculous vision to be true, for the more credit, Eusebius Pamphilus, in his first book *De vita Constantini*, doth witness moreover, that he had heard the said Constantinus himself oftentimes report, and also to swear this to be true and certain, which he did see with his own eyes in heaven, and also his soldiers about him. At the sight whereof when he was greatly astonished, and consulting with his men upon the meaning thereof, behold, in the night-season in his sleep, Christ appeared to him with the sign of the same cross which he had seen before, bidding him to make the figure thereof, and to carry it in his wars before him, and so should he have the victory.

Wherein is to be noted, (good reader), that this sign of the cross, and these letters added withal, *In hoc vince*, was given to him of God, not to induce any superstitious worship or opinion of the cross, as though the cross itself had any such power or strength in it, to obtain victory; but only to bear the meaning of another thing, that is, to be an admonition to him, to seek and aspire to the knowledge and faith of him which was crucified upon the cross for the salvation of him, and of all the world, and so to set forth



forth the glory of his name, as afterward it came to pass. This by the way. Now to the matter.

The next day following after this night's vision, Constantinus caused a cross after the same figuration to be made of gold and precious stone, and to be borne before him instead of his standard; and so with much hope of victory, and great confidence, as one armed from heaven, speedeth himself toward his enemy. Against whom Maxentius being constrained by force to issue out of the city, sendeth all his power to join with him in the field beyond the river of Tiber; where Maxentius craftily breaking down the bridge called *Pons Miluius*, caused another deceitful bridge to be made of boats and wherries, being joined together, and covered over with boards and planks in manner of a bridge, thinking therewith to take Constantine as in a trap. But here it came to pass, which in the seventh psalm is written, *He digged a pit, and fell therein himself; let his working return upon his own head, and his unrighteousness upon his own pate.* Which here in this Maxentius was rightly verified. For after the two hosts did meet, he being not able to sustain the force of Constantine fighting under the cross of Christ against him, was put to such a flight, and driven to such an exigent, that in retiring back, for haste thinking to get to the city, upon the same bridge which he did lay for Constantine, was overturned by the fall of his horse into the bottom of the flood, and there, with the weight of his armour, he, with a great part of his beaten men, were drowned; representing unto us the like example of Pharaoh and his host drowned in the Red sea, who not unaptly seemeth to bear a propheticall figuration of this Maxentius. For as the children of Israel were in long thralldom and persecution in Egypt under tyrants there, till the drowning of this Pharaoh their last persecutor; so was this Maxentius, and Maximinus, and Licinius, the last persecutors in the Roman monarchy of the Christians, whom this Constantine, fighting under the cross of Christ, did vanquish, and set the Christians at liberty, who before had been persecuted now three hundred years in Rome, as hath been hitherto in this history declared.

Wherefore, as the Israelites with their Moses, at the drowning

drowning of their Pharaoh, sung gloriously unto the Lord, who miraculously had cast down the horse and horsemen into the sea; so no less rejoicing and exceeding gladness was here, to see the glorious hand of the Lord Christ fighting with his people, and vanquishing his enemies and persecutors.

In histories we read of many victories and great conquests gotten; yet we never read, nor ever shall, of any victory so wholesome, so commodious, so opportune to mankind as this was, which made an end of so much bloodshed, and obtained so much liberty and life to the posterity of so many generations. For albeit that some persecution was yet stirring in the east countries by Maximinus and Licinius, as shall be declared; yet in Rome, and in all the west parts, no martyr died after this heavenly victory gotten. And also in the east parts the said Constantinus, with the said cross borne before him, consequently upon the same so vanquished the tyrants, and so established the peace of the church, that for the space of a just thousand years after that, we read of no set persecution against the Christians, unto the time of John Wickliffe, when the bishops of Rome began with fire to persecute the true members of Christ. So happy, so glorious (as I said) was this victory of Constantine, surnamed the Great. For the joy and gladness whereof, the citizens who had sent for him before, with exceeding triumph brought him into the city of Rome, where he with the cross was most honourably received, and celebrated the space of seven days together, having moreover in the market-place his image set up, holding in his right hand the sign of the cross, with this inscription: *Hoc salutari signo, veraci fortitudinis indicio, civitatem nostram iugo tyranni ereptam liberavi*; that is, "With this wholesome sign, the true token of fortitude, I have rescued and delivered our city from the yoke of the tyrant." *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 9.*

By this heavenly victory of Constantinus, and by the death of Maxentius, no little tranquillity came unto the church of Christ. Although notwithstanding in the east churches the storm of this tenth persecution was not yet altogether quieted, but that some tail thereof in those parts

parts remained for the space of two or three years. But of this we mind to speak (Christ willing) hereafter. In the mean season, to return again to the west parts here in Europe, where Constantinus then had most to do, great tranquillity followed, and long continued in the church, without any open slaughter, for a thousand years together, (to the time of John Wickliffe and Waldenses, as is before touched), by the means of the godly beginning of good Constantinus, who, with his fellow Licinius, being now established in their dominion, estfoons set forth their general proclamation or edict, not constraining therein any man to any religion, but giving liberty to all men, both for the Christians to persist in their profession without any danger, and for other men freely to adjoin with them, whosoever pleased. Which thing was very well taken and highly allowed of the Romans, and all wise men. The copy of the edict or constitution here ensueth.

The copy of the imperial constitution of Constantinus and Licinius, for the establishing of the free worshipping of God, after the Christian religion.

**N**OT long ago we weighing with ourselves, that the liberty and freedom of religion ought not in any case to be prohibited, but that free leave ought to be given to every man to do therein according to his will and mind, we have given commandment to all men to qualify matters of religion as they themselves thought good, and that also the Christians should keep the opinions and faith of their religion. But because that many and sundry opinions by the same our first licence spring and increase through such liberty granted, we thought good manifestly to add thereunto, and make plain such things whereby perchance some of them in time to come, may from such their observance be let or hindered. When therefore by prosperous success, I Constantinus Augustus, and I Licinius Augustus, came to Mediolanum, and there sat in council upon such things as served for the utility and profit of the commonwealth, these things amongst others we thought would be beneficial



beneficial to all men, yea, and before all other things we purposed to establish those things wherein the true reverence and worship of God is comprehended, that is, to give unto the Christians free choice to follow what religion they think good, and whereby the same sincerity and celestial grace, which is in every place received, may also be embraced and accepted of all our loving subjects. According therefore unto this our pleasure, upon good advisement and sound judgment, we have decreed, that no man so hardly be denied to choose and follow the Christian observance or religion; but that this liberty be given to every man, that he may apply his mind to what religion he thinketh meet himself, whereby God may perform upon us all his accustomed care and goodness. To the intent therefore you might know that this is our pleasure, we thought it necessary this to write unto you, whereby all such errors and opinions being removed, which in our former letters (being sent unto you in the behalf of the Christians) are contained, and which seem very indiscreet and contrary to our clemency, may be made frustrate and annihilate. Now therefore firmly and freely, we will and command, that every man have a free liberty to observe the Christian religion, and that without any grief or molestation he may be suffered to do the same. These things have we thought good to signify unto you by as plain words as we may, that we have given to the Christians free and absolute power to keep and use their religion. And for so much as this liberty is absolutely given of us unto them, to use and exercise their former observance, if any be disposed, it is manifest that the same helpeth much to establish the public tranquillity of our time, every man to have licence and liberty to use and choose what kind of worshipping he list himself. And this is done of us, only for the intent, that we would have no man to be enforced to one religion more than another. And this thing also amongst others we have provided for the Christians, that they may have again the possession of such places, in which heretofore they have been accustomed to make their assemblies; so that if any have bought or purchased the same, either of us, or of any other, the same places, without either money or other recom-

pence, forthwith and without delay we will to be restored again unto the said Christians. And if any man have obtained the same by gift from us, and shall require any recompence to be made to them in that behalf, then let the Christians repair to the president (being the judge appointed for that place) that consideration may be had of those men by our benignity: all which things we will and command, that you see to be given and restored freely, and with diligence unto the society of the Christians, all delay set apart. And because the Christians themselves are understood to have had not only those places wherein they were accustomed to resort together, but certain other peculiar places also, not being private to any one man, but belonging to the right of their congregation and society; you shall see also all those to be restored unto the Christians, that is to say, to every fellowship and company of them, according to the decree, whereof we have made mention, all delay set apart. Provided, that the order we have taken in the mean time be observed, that if any (taking no recompence) shall restore the same lands and possessions, they shall not mistrust, but be sure to be saved harmless by us. In all these things it shall be your part to employ your diligence in the behalf of the foresaid company of the Christians, whereby this our commandment may speedily be accomplished, and also in this case by our clemency the common and public peace may be preserved. For undoubtedly by this means, as before we have said, the good-will and favour of God towards us (whereof in many cases we have had good experience) shall always continue with us. And to the intent that this our constitution may be notified to all men, it shall be requisite that the copy of these our letters be set up in all places, that men may read and know the same, lest any should be ignorant thereof. *Euseb. lib. 10. cap. 5.*

By these histories I doubt not (good reader) but thou dost right well consider and behold with thyself the marvellous working of God's mighty power; to see so many emperors at one time conspired and confederate together against the Lord, and Christ his anointed, whose names before we have recited, as Dioclesian, Maximinian, Galerius, Maxentius,

Maxentius, Maximinus, Severus, Licinius, who having the subjection of the whole world under their dominion, did bend and extend their whole might and devices, to extirpate the name of Christ, and of all Christians. Wherein if the power of man could have prevailed, what could they not do? or what could they do more then they did? If policy or devices could have served, what policy was there lacking? If torments or pains of death could have helped, what cruelty of torment by man could be invented, which was not attempted? If laws, edicts, proclamations, written not only in tables, but engraven in brass, could have stood, all this was practised against the weak Christians. And yet notwithstanding, to see how no counsel can stand against the Lord, note here how all these be gone, and yet Christ and his church doth stand. First, of the taking away of Maximinian you have heard, also of the death of Severus, of the drowning moreover of Maxentius enough hath been said. What a terrible plague was upon Galerius, consuming his privy members with lice, hath been also described. How Dioclesian the quondam being at Salona, hearing of the proceedings of Constantinus, and this edict, either for sorrow died, or, as some say, did poison himself. Only Maximinus now in the east parts remained alive, who bare a deadly hatred against the Christians, and no less expressed the same with mortal persecution, to whom Constantine and Licinius caused this constitution of theirs to be delivered. At the sight whereof, although he was somewhat appalled, and defeated of his purpose; yet for so much as he saw himself too weak to resist the authority of Constantinus and Licinius the superior princes, he dissembled his counterfeit piety, as though he himself had tendered the quiet of the Christians, directing down a certain decree in the behalf of the Christians, wherein he pretendeth to write to Sabinus afore mentioned, first repeating unto him the former decree of Dioclesian and Maximinian in few words, with the commandment therein contained touching the persecution against the Christians. After that, he reciteth the decree which he himself made against them, when he came first to the imperial dignity in the east part joined with Constantinus. Then the counter-



mand of another decree of his again, for the rescuing of the Christians, with such feigned and pretended causes as is in the same to be seen. After that, he declareth, how he coming to Nicomedia, at the suit and supplication of the citizens, (which he also feigned, as may appear before), he applying to their suit, revoked that his former edict, and granted them that no Christian should dwell within their city or territories. Upon which Sabinus also had given forth his letters, rehearsing withal the general countermand sent forth by him, for the persecution again of the Christians. Last of all, now he sendeth down again another surrecountermand, with the causes therein contained, touching the safety of the Christians, and tranquillity of them, commanding Sabinus to publish the same. Which edict of his is at large set forth of Eusebius, *lib. 9. cap. 9.* But this surrecountermand he then dissembled, as he had done in the other before. Howbeit shortly after, he making wars, and fighting a battle with Licinius, wherein he lost the victory, coming home again, took great indignation against the priests and prophets of his gods, whom before that time he had great regard unto, and honoured; upon whose answers he trusting, and depending upon their enchantments, began his war against Licinius. But after that he perceived himself to be deceived by them, as by wicked enchanters and deceivers, and such as had betrayed his safety and person, he killed and put them to death. And he shortly after, oppressed with a certain disease, glorified the God of the Christians, and made a most absolute law for the safety and preservation of them, with franchise and liberty, the copy whereof ensueth.

“Imperator Cæsar, Gaius, Valerius, Maximinus, Germanicus, Pius, Fortunatus, Augustus. It is necessary that we always carefully provide and see unto the benefit and commodity of such as be our subjects, and to exhibit such things unto them, whereby they may best obtain the same. But we suppose that there are none of you so ignorant, but know and understand what things make best for the profit and commodity of the commonwealth, and best please every man’s disposition. But it is meet and convenient that every man have recourse to that which they have seen done before

before their eyes, and that all sorts of men consider the same, and bear it in their minds. When therefore, and that before this time, it came to our knowledge, upon the occasion that Dioclesianus, and Maximinianus, our progenitors of famous memory, commanded the assemblies and meetings of the Christians to be cut off, there were many of them spoiled and robbed of our officials: which thing we also perceive is now put in practice against our subjects, that they in like case may be spoiled of their goods and substance; which thing chiefly to prevent is our only endeavour. By our letters sent to the governors of every province the year past, we ordained that if any man were disposed to lean unto the Christian religion, he might, without any injury done unto him, accomplish his desire, neither to be of any man either let or molested; and that he might, without any fear or suspicion, do whatsoever he therein thought good. But now also we understand that there be certain judges which have neglected our commandment, and have put our subjects in doubt, whether that hath been our pleasure or not; which thing they did, that such men might be the better advised, how they entered into such religion, wherein they followed their own phantasy. To the intent therefore that after this, all suspicion, doubt, and fear, may be taken away, we have thought good to publish this our edict; whereby it may be made manifest to every man, that it shall be lawful for all such as will follow that religion, by the benefit of this our grant and letters-patent, to use what religion they like best. And also hereby we grant to them licence to build them oratories or temples. And furthermore, that this our grant may more amply extend unto them, we vouchsafe to appoint and ordain, that whatsoever lands and substance before belonging and appertaining to the Christians, and by the commandment of our predecessor were transposed to our revenue and exchequer, or else be in the possession of any city, by means of the franchises of the same, or else otherwise sold or given to any man; all and every parcel thereof we command shall be restored unto the proper use of the Christians again, whereby they may all have in this matter  
more

more experience of our godly devotion and providence." *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 10.*

Maximinus then being conquered of Licinius, and also plagued with an incurable disease in the guts sent by the hand of God, was compelled by torments and adversity to confess the true God, whom before he regarded not, and to write this edict in the favour of those Christians whom before he did persecute. Thus *Anno 319.* the Lord doth make many times his enemies, be they never so stern and stout, at length to stoop, and maugre their hearts to confess him, as this Maximinus here did, who not long after, by the vehemency of his disease, ended his life; whereby no more tyrants now were left alive, to trouble the church, but only Licinius. Of which Licinius, and of his persecutions stirred up in the east parts against the saints of God, now remaineth in order of story to prosecute.

This Licinius being a Dane born, and made first Cesar by Galerius, as is above specified, was afterward joined with Constantinus in government of the empire, and in setting forth the edicts, which before we have described, although it seemeth all this to be done of him with a dissembling mind. For so is he in all histories described, to be a man passing all others in desire of unsatiable riches, given to lechery, hasty, stubborn, and furious. To learning he was such an enemy, that he named the same a poison, and a common pestilence, and especially the knowledge of the laws. He thought no vice worse became a prince than learning, because he himself was unlearned. *Eutropius, Latus, Ignatius. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 13.*

There was between him and Constantinus in the beginning great familiarity, and such agreement, that Constantinus gave unto him his sister Constantia in matrimony, as Aurelius Victor writeth. Neither would any man have thought him to have been of any other religion than Constantinus was of, he seemed in all things so well to agree with him. Whereupon he made a decree with Constantinus in the behalf of the Christians, as we have shewed. *Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 9.* And such was Licinius in the beginning: but after arming himself with tyranny, began to conspire



conspire against the person of Constantinus, of whom he had received so great benefits; neither favourable to the law of nature, nor mindful of his oaths, his blood, nor promises. But when he considered, that in his conspiracies he nothing prevailed, for that he saw Constantinus was preserved and safely defended of God, and partly being puffed up with the victory against Maximinus, he began vehemently to hate him, and not only to reject the Christian religion, but also deadly to hate the same. He said he would become an enemy unto the Christians, for that in their assemblies and meetings they prayed not for him, but for Constantinus. Therefore first by little and little, and that secretly, he went about to wrong and hurt the Christians, and banished them his court, which never were by any means prejudicial to his kingdom. Then he commanded that all those should be deprived which were knights of the honourable order, unless they would do sacrifice to devils. *Euseb. lib. 10. cap. 8.* The same persecution afterward stretched he from his court, into all his provinces, which with most wicked and devised laws he set forth. First, that for no cause the bishops should in any matter communicate together; neither that any man should come at the churches next unto them, or to call any assemblies, and consult for the necessary matters and utility of the church.

After, that the men and women together should not come in companies to pray, nor that the women should come in those places where they used to preach and read the word of God; neither that they should be after that instructed any more of the bishops, but should choose out such women amongst them as should instruct them. The third most cruel and wickedest of all was, that none should help and succour those that were cast in prison, nor should bestow any alms or charity upon them, though they should die for hunger; and they which shewed any compassion upon those that were condemned to death, should be as greatly punished, as they to whom they shewed the same should be. *Euseb. libro primo de vita Constantini.* These were the most horrible constitutions of Licinius, which went beyond and passed the bounds of nature.

After

After this he used violence against the bishops, but yet not openly, for fear of Constantinus, but privily and by conspiracy; by which means he slew those that were the worthiest men amongst the doctors and prelates. And about Amasea, and other cities of Pontus, he razed the churches even with the ground. Other some he shut up, that no man should come after their accustomed manner to pray and worship God: and therefore, as we said before, his conscience accusing him, all this he did, for that he suspected they prayed for Constantinus, and not at all for him. And from this place in the east parts to the Libyans, which bordered upon the Egyptians, the Christians durst not assemble and come together for the displeasure of Licinius, which he had conceived against them. *Sozom. lib. 1. cap. 2.*

Furthermore, the flattering officers that were under him, thinking by this means to please him, slew and made out of the way many bishops, and without any cause put them to death, as though they had been homicides and heinous offenders; and such rigorousness used they towards some of them, that they cut their bodies into gobbets and small pieces in manner of a butcher, and after that threw them into the sea to feed the fishes. *Euseb. lib. 10. cap. 8.* What shall we speak of the exiles and confiscations of good and virtuous men? For he took by violence every man's substance, and cared not by what means he came by the same; but threatened them with death, unless they would forgo the same. He banished those which had committed no evil at all. He commanded that both gentlemen and men of honour should be made out of the way; neither yet herewith content, but gave their daughters that were unmarried to varlets and wicked ones to be deflowered. And Licinius himself, (although that by reason of his years his body was spent), yet shamefully did he vitiate many women, mens wives, and maids. *Euseb. lib. 1. de vita Constantini.* Which cruel outrage of him caused many godly men of their own accord to forsake their houses; and it was also seen, that the woods, fields, desert places, and mountains, were fain to be the habitations and resting-places of the poor and miserable Christians. *Euseb. lib. 10. cap. 14.* Of those

those worthy men and famous martyrs, which in this persecution found the way to heaven, Nicephorus, *lib. 7. cap. 10.* first speaketh of Theodorus, who first being hanged upon the cross, had nails thrust into his arm-pits, and after that his head stricken off; also of another Theodorus being the bishop of Tyre; the third was a man of Perga; Basilus also the bishop of Amasenus, Nicholaus the bishop of Mirorus, Gregorius of Armenia the Great; after that Paul of Neocæsarea, which, by the impious commandment of Licinius, had both his hands cut off with a searing iron. Besides these there were in the city of Sebastia forty worthy men, and Christian soldiers, in the vehement cold time of winter soufed and drowned in a horse-pond; when Locias as yet, of whom we spoke before, and Agricolaus, executing the sheriff's office under Licinius in the east parts, were alive, and were in great estimation, for inventing of new and strange torments against the Christians. The wives of those forty good men were carried to Heraclea a city in Thracia, and there, with a certain deacon whose name was Amones, were (after innumerable torments by them most constantly endured) slain with the sword. These things writeth Nicephorus. Also Sozomenus, *lib. 9. cap. 2.* maketh mention of the same martyrs. And Basilus in a certain oration seemeth to intreat of their history, saving that in the circumstances he somewhat varieth. And surely Licinius was determined, for that the first face of this persecution fell out according to his desire, to have over-run all the Christians; to which thing neither council, nor goodwill, nor yet opportunity perchance wanted, unless God had brought Constantinus into those parts where he governed: where, in the wars which he himself began, (knowing right well that Constantinus had intelligence of his conspiracy and treason), joining battle with him, he was overcome.

Divers battles between them were fought; the first fought in Hungary, where Licinius was overthrown; then he fled into Macedonia, and repairing his army was again discomfited. Finally, being vanquished both by sea and land, he lastly at Nicomedia yielded himself to Constantine,



and was commanded to live a private life in Theſſalia, where at length he was ſlain by the ſoldiers.

Thus have ye heard the end and concluſion of all the ſeven tyrants which were the authors and workers of this tenth and laſt perfecution againſt the true people of God. The chief captain and incentor of which perfecution was firſt Diocleſian, who died at Selena, as ſome ſay, by his own poiſon, in the year of our Lord three hundred and nineteen. The next was Maximinian, who (as is ſaid) was hanged of Conſtantine at Maſilia, about the year of our Lord three hundred and ten. Then died Galerius, plagued with an horrible diſeaſe ſent of God. Severus was ſlain by Maximinian, father of Maxentius the wicked tyrant, who was overcome and vanquiſhed of Conſtantine, in the year of our Lord three hundred and eighteen. Maximinus the ſixth tyrant tarried not long after, who being overcome by Licinius, died about the year of our Lord three hundred and twenty. Laſtly, how this Licinius was overcome by Conſtantine and ſlain, in the year of our Lord three hundred twenty and four, is before declared. Only Conſtantius, the father of Conſtantine, being a good and a godly emperor, died in the third year of the perfecution, in the year of our Lord three hundred and ten, and was buried at York. After whom ſucceeded, after his godly father, Conſtantinus, as a ſecond Moſes ſent and ſet up of God to deliver his people out of this ſo miſerable captivity, into liberty moſt joyful.

Now remaineth after the end of theſe perſecutors thus deſcribed, to gather up the names and ſtories of certain particular martyrs, which now are to be ſet forth worthy of ſpecial memory, for their ſingular conſtancy and fortitude, ſhewed in their ſufferings and cruel torments. The names of all which that ſuffered in this foreſaid tenth perfecution, being in number infinite, in virtue moſt excellent, it is impoſſible here to comprehend: but the moſt notable, and in moſt approved authors expreſſed, we thought here to inſert, for the more edification of other Chriſtians, which may and ought to look upon their examples, firſt beginning with Albanus, the firſt martyr that ever in England ſuffered death for the name of Chriſt.

At what time Dioclesian and Maximinian the Pagan emperors had directed out their letters with all severity for the persecuting of the Christians; Alban being then an infidel, received into his house a certain clerk, flying from the persecutors hands, whom then Alban beheld, continually both day and night to persevere in watching and prayer, suddenly, by the great mercy of God, he began to imitate the example of his faith and virtuous life: whereupon by little and little he being instructed by his wholesome exhortation, and leaving the blindness of his idolatry, became at length a perfect Christian. And when the forenamed clerk had lodged with him a certain time, it was informed the wicked prince, that this good man and confessor of Christ (not yet condemned to death) was harboured in Alban's house, or very near unto him. Whereupon immediately he gave in charge to the soldiers, to make more diligent inquisition of the matter. Who as soon as they came to the house of Alban the martyr, he by and by putting on the apparel wherewith his guest and master was apparelled, (that is, a garment at that time used, named *caracalla*), offered himself in the stead of the other to the soldiers; who binding him, brought him forthwith to the judge. It fortuned that at that instant when blessed Alban was brought unto the judge, they found the same judge at the altars offering sacrifice unto devils, who as soon as he saw Alban, was straightways in a great rage, for that he would presume of his own voluntary will, to offer himself to peril, and give himself a prisoner to the soldiers, for safeguard of his guest whom he harboured; and commanded him to be brought before the images of the devils whom he worshipped, saying, For that thou hadst rather hide and convey away a rebel, than to deliver him to the officers, and that (as a contemner of our gods) he should not suffer punishment and merit of his blasphemy; look what punishment he should have had, thou for him shalt suffer the same, if I perceive thee any whit to revolt from our manner of worshipping. But blessed Alban, who of his own accord had bewrayed to the persecutors that he was a Christian, feared not at all the menaces of the prince, but being armed with the spiritual armour, openly pronounced that he would not

obey his commandment. Then said the judge, Of what stock or kindred art thou come? Alban answered, What is that to you, of what stock soever I came of, if you desire to hear the verity of my religion, I do ye to wit that I am a Christian, and apply myself altogether to that calling. Then said the judge, I would know thy name, and see thou tell me the same without delay. Then said he, My parents named me Alban, and I worship and honour the true and living God, which hath created all the world. Then said the judge, fraught with fury, If thou wilt enjoy the felicity of this present life, do sacrifice (and that out of hand) to these mighty gods. Alban replieth, These sacrifices which ye offer unto devils, can neither help them that offer the same, neither yet can they accomplish the desires and prayers of their suppliants; but rather shall they, whatsoever they be, that offer sacrifice to these idols, receive for their meed everlasting pains of hell-fire. The judge when he heard these words, was passing angry, and commanded the tormentors to whip this holy confessor of God, endeavouring to overcome the constancy of his heart with stripes, which had prevailed nothing with words. And when he was cruelly beaten, yet suffered he the same patiently, nay, rather joyfully for the Lord's sake. Then when the judge saw that he would not with torments be overcome, nor be reduced from the worship of Christian religion, he commanded him to be beheaded.

The rest that followeth of this story in the narration of Beda, as of drying up the river, as Alban went to the place of his execution; then of making a well-spring in the top of the hill; and of the falling out of the eyes of him that did behead him, (with such other prodigious miracles mentioned in his story); because they seem more legend-like than truth-like; again, because I see no great profit nor necessity in the relation thereof, I leave them to the free judgment of the reader, to think of them as cause shall move him.

The like estimation I have of the long story, wherein is written at large, a fabulous discourse of all the doings and miracles of St Alban, taken out of the library of St Albans, compiled (as there is said) by a certain Pagan, who (as he  
saith)



faith) afterward went to Rome, there to be baptized. But because in the beginning or prologue of the book, the said writer maketh mention of the ruinous walls of the town of Verolamium, containing the story of Albanus, and of his bitter punishments; which walls were then falling down for age, at the writing of the said book, as he saith; thereby it seemeth this story to be written a great while after the martyrdom of Alban, either by a Briton, or by an Englishman. If he were a Briton, how then did the Latin translation take it out of the English tongue, as in the prologue he himself doth testify? If he were an Englishman, how then did he go up to Rome for baptism, being a Pagan, when he might have been baptized among the Christian Britons more near at home?

But among all other evidences and declarations sufficient to disprove this legendary story of St Alban, nothing maketh more against it, than the very story itself; as where he bringeth in the head of the holy martyr to speak unto the people after it was smitten off from the body; also where he bringeth in the angels going up, and coming down in a pillar of fire, and singing all the night long; *item*, in the river which he saith St Alban made dry, such as were drowned in the same before in the bottom were found alive; with other such like monkish-miracles and gross fables, wherewith these abbey-monks were wont in times past to deceive the church of God, and to beguile the whole world for their own advantage. Notwithstanding this, I write not to any derogation of the blessed and faithful martyr of God, who was the first that I did ever find in this realm, to suffer martyrdom for the testimony of Christ. And worthy no doubt of condign commendation, especially of us here in this land; whose Christian faith in the Lord, and charity towards his neighbour, I pray God all we may follow. As also I wish, moreover, that the stories both of him, and of all other Christian martyrs, might have been delivered to us simple as they were, without the admixture of all these abbey-like additions of monkish-miracles, wherewith they were wont to paint out the glory of such saints to the most, by whose offerings they were accustomed to receive most advantage.

As touching the name of the clerk mentioned in this story, whom Alban received into his house, I find in the English stories to be Amphibalus, although the Latin authors name him not, who the same time flying into Wales, was also fetcht from thence again to the same town of Verolanium, otherwise called Verlancaſter, where he was martyred, having his belly opened, and made to run about a ſtake, while all his bowels were drawn out, then thruſt in with ſwords and daggers; and at laſt was ſtoned to death, as the foreſaid legend declareth.

Moreover, the ſame time with Alban ſuffered alſo two citizens of the aforeſaid city of Verlancaſter, whoſe names were Aaron and Julius; beſide others, whereof a great number the ſame time no doubt did ſuffer, although our chronicles of their names do make no rehearſal.

The time of the martyrdom of this bleſſed Alban and the other, ſeemeth to be about the ſecond or third year of this tenth perſecution, under the tyranny of Diocleſian, and Maximinianus Hercuſius, bearing then the rule in England, about the year of our Lord three hundred and one, before the coming of Conſtantius to his government. Where by the way is to be noted, that this realm of Britain being ſo chriſtened before, yet never was touched with any other of the nine perſecutions, before this tenth perſecution of Diocleſian and Maximinian. In which perſecution our ſtories and Polychronicon do record, that all Chriſtianity almoſt in the whole iſland was deſtroyed, the churches ſubverted, all books of the ſcripture burned, many of the faithful, both men and women, were ſlain; amongſt whom the firſt and chief ring-leader (as hath been ſaid) was Albanus. And thus much touching the martyrs of Britain. Now from England to return again unto other countries, where this perſecution did more vehemently rage; we will add hereunto (the Lord willing) the ſtories of others, although not of all that ſuffered in this perſecution, (which were impoſſible), but of certain moſt principal, whoſe ſingular conſtancy in their ſtrong torments are chiefly renowned in later hiſtories. Beginning firſt with Romanus, the notable and admirable ſoldier and true ſervant of Chriſt, whoſe hiſtory ſet forth in Prudentius, doth thus proceed;

so lamentably by him described, that it will be hard for any man almost with dry cheeks to hear it.

Pitiless Galerius, with his grand captain Asclepiades, violently invaded the city of Antioch, intending by force of arms to drive all Christians to renounce utterly their pure religion. The Christians as God would, were at that time congregated together, to whom Romanus hastily ran, declaring that the wolves were at hand which would devour the Christian flock; but fear not, said he, neither let this imminent peril disturb you my brethren. Brought was it to pass, by the great grace of God working in Romanus, that old men and matrons, fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, were all of one will and mind, most ready to shed their blood in defence of their Christian profession. Word was brought unto the captain, that the band of armed soldiers was not able to wrest the staff of faith out of the hand of the armed congregation, and all by reason that one Romanus so mightily did encourage them, that they stick not to offer their naked throats, wishing gloriously to die for the name of their Christ. Seek out that rebel, (quoth the captain), and bring him to me that he may answer for the whole sect. Apprehended he was, and bound as a sheep appointed to the slaughter-house, was presented to the emperor, who with wrathful countenance beholding him, said, What, art thou the author of this sedition? art thou the cause why so many shall lose their lives? By the gods I swear thou shalt smart for it, and first in thy flesh shalt thou suffer the pains, whereunto thou hast encouraged the hearts of thy fellows. Romanus answered, Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace; I refuse not to be sacrificed for my brethren, and that by as cruel means as thou mayst invent: and whereas thy soldiers were repelled from the Christian congregation, that so happened, because it lay not in idolaters and worshippers of devils, to enter into the holy house of God, and to pollute the place of true prayer. Then Asclepiades wholly inflamed with this stout answer, commanded him to be trussed up, and his bowels drawn out. The executioners themselves more pitiful in heart than the captain, said, Not so, Sir, this man is of noble parentage, unlawful it is to put a nobleman to  
so



so unnoble a death. Scourge him then with whips, (quoth the captain), with knaps of lead at the ends. Instead of tears, sighs, and groans, Romanus sung psalms all the time of his whipping, requiring them not to favour him for nobility's sake; not the blood of my progenitors (said he), but Christian profession maketh me noble. Then with great power of spirit he inveighed against the captain, laughing to scorn the false gods of the Heathen, with the idolatrous worshipping of them, affirming the God of the Christians to be the true God that created heaven and earth, before whose judicial seat all nations shall appear. But the wholesome words of the martyr were as oil to the fire of the captain's fury. The more the martyr spake, the madder was he, insomuch that he commanded the martyr's sides to be lanced with knives, until the bones appeared white again. Sorry am I, O captain, (quoth the martyr), not for that my flesh shall be thus cut and mangled, but for thy cause am I sorrowful, who being corrupted with damnable errors, seducest others. The second time he preached at large the living God, and the Lord Jesus Christ his well-beloved Son, eternal life through faith in his blood, expressing therewith the abomination of idolatry, with a vehement exhortation to worship and adore the living God. At these words Asclepiades commanded the tormentors to strike Romanus on the mouth, that his teeth being stricken out, his pronounciation at leastwise might be impaired. The commandment was obeyed, his face buffeted, his eye-lids torn with their nails, his cheeks scotched with knives, the skin of his beard was plucked by little and little from the flesh; finally, his seemly face was wholly defaced. The meek martyr said, I thank thee, O captain, that thou hast opened unto me many mouths, whereby I may preach my Lord and Saviour Christ. Look how many wounds I have, so many mouths I have lauding and praising God. The captain astonished with this singular constancy, commanded them to cease from the tortures. He threateneth cruel fire, he revileth the noble martyr, he blasphemeth God, saying, Thy crucified Christ is but a yesterday's God, the gods of the Gentiles are of most antiquity.

Here again Romanus taking good occasion, made a long oration

oration of the eternity of Christ, of his human nature, of the death and satisfaction of Christ for all mankind. Which done, he said, Give me a child (O captain) but seven years of age, which age is free from malice and other vices, where-with riper age is commonly infected, and thou shalt hear what he will say. His request was granted. A pretty boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him. Tell me, my babe, (quoth the martyr), whether thou think it reason, that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we worship infinite gods? Unto whom the babe answered, That certainly, whatsoever it be that men affirm to be God, must needs be one; which with one, is one and the same; and in as much as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the true God; for that there be many gods, we children cannot believe. The captain here-at clean amazed, said, Thou young villain and traitor, where, and of whom learnedst thou this lesson? Of my mother, (quoth the child), with whose milk I sucked in this lesson, that I must believe in Christ. The mother was called, and she gladly appeared. The captain commanded the child to be horsed up, and scourged. The pitiful beholders of this pitiless act, could not temper themselves from tears; the joyful and glad mother alone, stood by with dry cheeks; yea, she rebuked her sweet babe for craving a draught of cold water, she charged him to thirst after the cup that the infants of Bethlehem once drank of, forgetting their mothers milk and paps; she willed him to remember little Isaac, who beholding the sword wherewith, and the altar whereon, he should be sacrificed, willingly proffered his tender neck to the dint of his father's sword. Whilst this counsel was in giving, the butcherly torturer pluckt the skin from the crown of his head, hair and all. The mother cried, Suffer, my child, anon thou shalt pass to him that will adorn thy naked head with a crown of eternal glory. The mother counselleth, the child is counselled; the mother encourageth, the babe is encouraged, and received the stripes with smiling countenance. The captain perceiving the child invincible, and himself vanquished, committeth the silly soul, the blessed babe, the child uncherished, to the stinking prison, commanding the

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torments

torments of Romanus to be renewed and increased, as chief author of this evil.

Thus was Romanus brought forth again to new stripes, the punishments to be renewed and received upon his old sores, insomuch as the bare bones appeared, the flesh all torn away; wherein no pity was shewed, but the raging tyrant puffing out of his blasphemous mouth, like a mad man, these words, cried out to the tormentors, saying,

*Where is, (quoth the captain), where is your might?*

*What? are ye not able one body to spill?*

*Scant may it, so weak is it, stand upright:*

*And yet in spite of us, shall it live still?*

*The griff with talon, the dog with his tooth,*

*Could soon, ye dastards, this corps rent and tear:*

*He scorneth our gods in all that he doth,*

*Cut, prick, and pounce him, no longer forbear.*

Yea, no longer could the tyrant forbear, but needs he must draw nearer to the sentence of death. Is it painful to thee (saith he) to tarry so long alive? A flaming fire, doubt thou not, shall be prepared for thee by and by, wherein thou and that boy, thy fellow of rebellion, shall be consumed into ashes. Romanus and the babe were led to the place of execution. As they laid hands on Romanus, he looked back, saying, I appeal from this thy tyranny, O judge unjust, unto the righteous throne of Christ that upright Judge; not because I fear thy cruel torments and merciless handlings, but that thy judgments may be known to be cruel and bloody. Now when they were come to the place, the tormentor required the child of the mother, for she had taken it up in her arms; and she only kissing it, delivered the babe; Farewell, she said, my sweet child. And as the hangman applied his sword to the babe's neck, she sang on this manner:

*All laud and praise with heart and voice,*

*O Lord, we yield to thee:*

*To whom the death of all thy saints,*

*We know most dear to be.*



The innocent's head being cut off, the mother wrapped it up in her garment, and laid it to her breast. On the other side, a mighty fire was made, whereinto Romanus was cast, who said, that he should not burn; wherewith a great storm arose, (if it be true), and quenched the fire. The captain gave in commandment that his tongue should be cut out. Out was it plucked by the hard roots and cut off: nevertheless he spake, saying, He that speaketh Christ, shall never want a tongue; think not that the voice that uttereth Christ, hath need of the tongue to be the minister. The captain at this, half out of his wit, bare in hand that the hangman deceived the sight of the people by some subtle sleight and crafty conveyance. Not so, (quoth the hangman), if you suspect my deed, open his mouth, and diligently search the roots of his tongue. The captain at length being confounded with the fortitude and courage of the martyr, straitly commandeth him to be brought back into the prison, and there to be strangled. Where his sorrowful life and pains being ended, he now enjoyeth quiet rest in the Lord, with perpetual hope of his miserable body to be restored again, with his soul, into a better life, where no tyrant shall have any power. *Prudentius in hymnis de coronis martyrum.*

Gordius was a citizen of Cesarea, a worthy soldier, and captain of an hundred men. He, in the time of extreme persecution, refusing any longer to execute his charge, did choose of his own accord willing exile, and lived in the desert many years a religious and a solitary life. But upon a certain day, when a solemn feast of Mars was celebrated in the city of Cesarea, and much people were assembled in the theatre to behold the games; he left the desert, and got him up into the chief place of the theatre, and with a loud voice uttered this saying of the apostle, *Behold, I am found of them which sought me not, and to those which asked not for me, have I openly appeared.* By which words he let it to be understood, that of his own accord he came unto those games. At this noise, the multitude, little regarding the sights, looked about to see who it was that made such exclamation. As soon as it was known to be Gordius, and that the crier had commanded silence, he was brought un-

to the sheriff, who at that instant was present, and ordained the games. When he was asked the question, who he was, from whence, and for what occasion he came thither? he telleth the truth of every thing as it was; I am come, saith he, to publish, that I set nothing by your decrees against the Christian religion, but that I profess Jesus Christ to be my hope and safety; and when I understood with what cruelty ye handled other men, I took this as a fit time to accomplish my desire. The sheriff with these words was greatly moved, and revengeth all his displeasure upon poor Gordius, commanding the executioners to be brought out with scourges, while gibbet, and whatsoever torments else might be devised. Whereunto Gordius answered, saying, That it should be to him an hindrance and damage if he could not suffer and endure divers torments and punishments for Christ his cause. The sheriff being more offended with his boldness, commanded him to feel as many kind of torments as there were. With all which, Gordius notwithstanding, could not be mastered or overcome; but lifting up his eyes unto heaven, singeth this saying out of the psalms: *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear the thing that man can do to me*: and also this saying, *I will fear none evil, because thou, Lord, art with me*.

After this, he against himself provoketh the extremity of the tormentors, and blameth them if they favour him any thing at all. When the sheriff saw that hereby he could win but little, he goeth about by gentleness and enticing words, to turn the stout and valiant mind of Gordius. He promiseth to him great and large offers if he will deny Christ; as to make him a captain of as many men as any other is, to give him riches, treasure, and what other thing soever he desireth. But in vain (as the proverb is) pipeth the minstrel to him that hath no ears to hear; for he deriding the foolish madness of the magistrate, saith, That it lieth not in him to place any in authority, which be worthy to have a place in heaven. The magistrate with these words thoroughly angred and vexed, prepared himself to his condemnation. Whom after that he had condemned, he caused to be had out of the city to be burnt. There run out of the city great multitudes by heaps to see him  
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put to execution ; some take him in their arms, and lovingly kifs him, perfuading him to take a better way, and fave himfelf, and that with weeping tears. To whom Gordius answered, Weep not, I pray you, for me, but rather for the enemies of God, which always make war againft the Chriftians ; weep, I fay, for them which prepare for us a fire, purchafing hell-fire for themfelves in the day of vengeance ; and ceafe off further, I pray you, to moleft and difquiet my fettled mind. Truly (faith he) I am ready for the name of Chrift, to fuffer and endure a thoufand deaths, if need were. Some other came unto him, which perfuaded him to deny Chrift with his mouth, and to keep his confcience to himfelf. My tongue, (faith he), which by the goodnefs of God I have, cannot be brought to deny the author and giver of the fame : *For with the heart we believe unto righteoufnefs, and with the tongue we confefs unto falvation.* Many more fuch like words he fpake ; but efpecially uttering to them fuch matter, whereby he might perfuade the beholders to death, and to the defire of martyrdom. After all which, with a merry and glad countenance, never changing fo much as his colour, he willingly gave himfelf to be burnt. *Bafilus in fermone in Gordium militem Cæfarienfem.*

Not much unlike to the ftory of Gordius is the ftory alfo of Menas an Egyptian, who being likewise a foldier by his profeflion, in this perfecution of Diocleſian forfook all, and went into the defert ; where a long time he gave himfelf to abftinence, watching, and meditation of the ſcriptures. At length returning again to the city Cotis, there, in the open theatre, as the people were occupied upon their ſpectacles or paftimes, he with a loud voice openly proclaimed himfelf to be a Chriftian, and upon the fame was brought to Pyrrhus the preſident : of whom he being demanded of his faith, made this answer ; Convenient it is that I ſhould (faith he) confefs God, in whom is light and no darknefs, for fo much as Paul doth teach, that *with heart we believe unto righteoufnefs, with mouth confeſſion is given unto falvation.* After this the innocent martyr was moſt painfully pinched and cruciate with fundry puniſhments. In all which notwithstanding he declared a conſtant



stant heart, and faith invincible, having these words in his mouth being in the midst of his torments: There is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven, neither is all the world, if it were weighed in balance, able to be conferred with the price of one soul; and said, *Who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? Shall affliction or anguish?* And moreover, (said he), I have thus learned of my Lord and my King, not to fear them which kill the body, and have no power to kill the soul, but to fear him rather, who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell-fire. To make the story short, after manifold torments borne of him, and suffered, when the last sentence of death was upon him pronounced, which was to be beheaded; Menas, being then had to the place of execution, said, I give thee thanks, my Lord God, which hast so accepted me to be found a partaker of thy precious death, and hast not given me to be devoured of my fierce enemies, but hast made me to remain constant in thy pure faith unto this my latter end. And so this blessed soldier fighting valiantly under the banner of Christ, lost his head, and won his soul. *Simeon Metaphrast. tom. 5.* In the which author there followeth a long narration of the miracles of this holy man, which here for prolixity I do omit.

Basilus in a certain sermon of forty martyrs rehearseth this story not unworthy to be noted. There came (saith he) into a certain place (of which place he maketh no mention) the emperor's marshal or officer, with the edict which the emperor had set out against the Christians, that whosoever confessed Christ, should after many torments suffer death. And first they did privily suborn certain, which should detect and accuse the Christians whom they had found out, or had laid wait for. Upon this the sword, the gibbet, the wheel, and the whips were brought forth; at the terrible sight whereof, the hearts of all the beholders did shake and tremble. Some for fear did flee, some did stand in doubt what to do; certain were so terrified at the beholding of these engines and tormenting instruments, that they denied their faith. Some others began the game, and for a time did abide the conflict and agony of martyrdom, but vanquished at length, by the intolerable pain of their  
torments,

torments, made shipwreck of their consciences, and lost the glory of their confession. Among others, forty there were at that time, young gentlemen, all soldiers, which after the marshal had shewed the emperor's edict, and required of all men the obedience of the same, freely and boldly of their own accord confessed themselves to be Christians, and declared to him their names. The marshal somewhat amazed at this their boldness of speech, standeth in doubt what was best to do. Yet forthwith he goeth about to win them with fair words, advertising them to consider their youth, neither that they should change a sweet and pleasant life, for a cruel and untimely death; after that he promiseth them money, and honourable offices in the emperor's name. But they little esteeming all these things, brake forth into a long and bold oration, affirming, that they did neither desire life, dignity, nor money, but only the celestial kingdom of Christ, saying further, that they are ready for the love and faith they have in God, to endure the affliction of the wheel, the cross, and the fire. The rude marshal being herewith offended, devised a new kind of punishment. He spied out in the middle of the city a certain great pond, which lay full upon the cold northern wind, for it was in the winter time, wherein he caused them to be put all that night; but they being merry, and comforting one another, received this their appointed punishment, and said, as they were putting off their cloaths, We put off (said they) now not our cloaths, but we put off the old man, corrupt with the deceit of concupiscence; we give thee thanks, O Lord, that with this our apparel we may also put off by thy grace, the sinful man; for by means of the serpent, we once put him on, and by the means of Jesus Christ we now put him off. When they had thus said, they were brought naked into the place, where they felt most vehement cold, insomuch that all the parts of their bodies were stark and stiff therewith. Assoon as it was day, they yet having breath, were brought into the fire, wherein they were consumed, and their ashes thrown into the flood. By chance there was one of the company more lively, and not so near dead as the rest, of whom the executioners taking pity, said unto his mother standing by, that

that they would save his life. But she, with her own hands taking her son, brought him to the pile of wood, where the residue of his fellows, (crooked for cold), did lie ready to be burnt, and admonished him to accomplish the blessed journey he had taken in hand with his companions. *Basil.*

A like story of forty martyrs, which were married men, we read of in Nicephorus and Sozomenus, which were killed likewise in a lake or pond at Sebastia, a town of Armenia, under Licinius; if the story be not the same with this, *Niceph. Sozom. lib. 9. cap. 2.*

In this fellowship and company of martyrs cannot be left out and forgot the story of Cyrus. This Cyrus was a physician born in Alexandria, which flying into Egypt, in the persecution of Dioclesian and Maximian, led a solitary life in Arabia, being much spoken of for his learning and miracles, unto whose company after a certain time did Joannes, born in the city of Edeffa, beyond the river Euphrates, join himself, leaving the soldier's life which before that time he had exercised. But whilst as yet the same persecution raged in a city in Egypt called Canope, there was cast into prison for the confession of their faith, a certain godly Christian woman, called Athanasia, and her three daughters, Theoctiste, Theodota, and Eudoria; with whom Cyrus was well acquainted. At whose infirmities he much fearing, accompanied with his brother John, came and visited them for their better confirmation; at which time Lirianus was chief captain and lieutenant of Egypt; of whose wickedness and cruelty, especially against women and maidens, Athanasius maketh mention in his apologies, and in his epistle to those that lead a solitary life. This Cyrus therefore and Joannes, being accused and apprehended of the Heathen men, as by whose persuasions the maidens and daughters of Athanasia contumeliously despised the gods and the emperor's religion, and could by no means be brought to do sacrifice, were, after the publication of their constant confession, put to death by the sword; Athanasia also, and her three daughters, being condemned to death. This history writeth Simeon Metaphrastes.

Sebastian being born in the part of France called Gallia Narbonensis, was a Christian, and was lieutenant-general  
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of the vaward of Dioclesian the emperor, who also encouraged many martyrs of Christ by his exhortations unto constancy, and kept them in the faith. He being therefore accused to the emperor, was commanded to be apprehended, and that he should be brought into the open field, where of his own soldiers he was thrust through the body with innumerable arrows, and after that his body was thrown into a jakes or sink. Ambrosius maketh mention of this Sebastian the martyr in his commentary upon the hundred end eighteenth psalm; and Simeon Metaphrastes, amongst other martyrs that suffered with Sebastian, numbereth also these following, Nicostratus, with Zœ his wife, Tranquillinus, with Martia his wife, Traglinus, Claudius, Castor, Tibertius, Castellus, Marcus, and Marcellinus, with others more.

Basilus in another sermon also maketh mention of one Barlaam, being a noble and famous martyr, which abode all the torments of the executioners, even to the point of death; which thing when the tormentors saw, they brought him, and laid him upon the altar, where they did use to offer sacrifices to their idols, and put fire and frankincense into his right hand, wherein he had yet some strength, thinking that the same his right hand, by the heat and force of the fire, would have scattered the burning incense upon the altar, and so have sacrificed. But of that their hope, the pestiferous tormentors were disappointed; for the flame eat round about his hand, and the same endured as though it had been covered with hot embers, when as Barlaam recited out of the psalms this saying, *Blessed is the Lord my God, which teacheth my hands to fight.*

To this narration of Basilus, touching the martyrdom of Barlaam, we will annex consequently another story of Ambrose. He making a certain exhortation to certain virgins, in the same oration commendeth the martyrdoms of Agricola and Vitalis, who suffered also in the same persecution under Dioclesian and Maximinian (as they affirm) at Bononnie. This Vitalis was servant to Agricola, who both together between themselves had made a compact to give their lives with other martyrs for the name of Christ. Whereupon Vitalis being sent before of his master, to offer

himself to martyrdom, fell first into the hands of persecutors, who laboured about him by all means to cause him to deny Christ. Which when he would in no case do, but stoutly persisted in the confession of his faith, they began to exercise him with all kind of torments so unmercifully, that there was no whole skin left on all his body. So Vitalis, in the midst of the agony and painful torments, after he had in a short prayer commended himself to God, gave up his life. After him, the tormentors set upon Agricola his master, whose virtuous manners and gentle conditions, because they were singularly well liked and known to the enemies, his suffering therefore was the longer deferred. But Agricola not abiding the long delay and driving off, and provoking moreover the adversaries to quicker speed, at length was fastened unto the cross, and so finished his martyrdom, which he so long desired. *Ambros. in exhortatione ad virgines.*

No less worthy of commemoration is the lamentable martyrdom of Vincentius, whose history here followeth. This Vincentius was a Spaniard, and a Levite most godly and virtuous, who at this time suffered martyrdom at Valence under Dacianus the president, as we may gather by Prudentius in his hymn. Bergomensis in his supplement reciteth these words concerning his martyrdom, out of a certain sermon of St Augustine: Our heart conceived not a vain and fruitless sight, (as it were in beholding of lamentable tragedies), but certainly a great sight and marvellous, and there with singular pleasure received it, when the painful passion of victorious Vincentius was read unto us. Is there any so heavy-hearted, that will not be moved in the contemplation of this unmoveable martyr, so manly, or rather so godly, fighting against the craft and subtlety of that serpent, against the tyranny of Dacianus, against the horrors of death, and by the mighty Spirit of his God conquering all? But let us in few words rehearse the degrees of his torments, though the pains thereof in many words cannot be expressed. First, Dacianus caused the martyr to be laid upon the torture, and all the joints of his body to be distended and racked out, until they crackt again. This being done in most extreme and cruel manner, all the members

bers of his painful and pitiful body were grievously indented with deadly wounds. Thirdly, That his dolours and griefs might be augmented, they miserably vexed his flesh with iron combs sharply filed. And to the end the tormentors might vomit out all their vengeance on the meek and mild martyr's flesh, the tormentors themselves also were vilely scourged at the president's commandment. And lest his passion, through want of pains, might seem imperfect, or else too easy, they laid his body, being all out of joint, on a grate of iron; which when they had opened with iron hooks, they seared it with fiery plates, with hot-burning salt sprinkling the same. Last of all, into a vile dungeon was this mighty martyr drawn, the floor whereof first was thick spread with the sharpest shells that might be gotten; his feet then being fast locked in the stocks, there was he left alone without all worldly comfort: but the Lord his God was with him, the holy Spirit of God (whose office is to comfort the godly afflicted) fulfilled his heart with joy and gladness. Hast thou prepared a terrible rack (O cruel tyrant, O devouring lion) for the martyr's bed? The Lord shall make that bed soft and sweet unto him. Rackest thou his bones and joints all asunder? His bones, his joints, his hairs are all numbered. Tormentest thou his flesh with mortal wounds? The Lord shall pour abundantly into all his sores of his oil of gladness. Thy scraping combs, thy sharp flesh-hooks, thine hot searing irons, thy parched salt, thy stinking prison, thy cutting shells, thy pinching stocks shall turn to this patient martyr to the best. All together shall work contrary to thine expectation, great plenty of joy shall he reap into the barn of his soul, out of this mighty harvest of pains that thou hast brought him into. Yea, thou shalt prove him Vincentius indeed; that is, a vanquisher, a triumpher, a conqueror, subduing thy madness by his meekness, thy tyranny by his patience, thy manifold means of tortures by the manifold graces of God, wherewith he is plentifully enriched.

In this catalogue or company of such holy martyrs, as suffered in this foresaid tenth persecution, many more, and almost innumerable, there be expressed in authors, beside them whom we have hitherto comprehended, as Philoro-



mus, a man of noble birth and great possessions in Alexandria, who being persuaded by his friends to favour himself, to respect his wife, to consider his children and family, did not only reject the counsels of them, but also neglected the threats and torments of the judge, to keep the confession of Christ inviolate unto the death, and losing of his head, *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 9. Niceph. lib. 7. cap. 9.*; of whom Eusebius beareth witness that he was there present himself.

Of like estate and dignity was also Procopius in Palestina, who after his conversion brake his images of silver and gold, and distributed the same to the poor; and after all kind of torments, of racking, of cording, of tearing his flesh, of goring and stabbing in, of firing, at length had his head also smitten off, as witnesseth Nicephorus, *lib. 8. cap. 15.*

To this may be joined also Georgius, a young man of Cappadocia, who stoutly inveighing against the impious idolatry of the emperors, was apprehended and cast into prison, then torn with hooked irons, burnt with hot lime, stretched with cords, after that his hands and feet, with other members of his body, being cut off, at last with a sword had his head cut off. *Niceph. ibid.*

With these aforementioned, add also Sergius and Bacchius, Panthaleon, a physician in Nicomedia, mentioned in *Supplem. lib. 8.* Theodorus of the city of Amasia in Hellespont, mentioned of Vincentius, *lib. 3.* Faustus, a martyr of Egypt, mentioned of Nicephorus, *lib. 8. cap. 5.* Gereon, with three hundred and eighteen fellow-martyrs, which suffered about Color, *Petr. de nat. lib. 9. cap. 49.* Hermogenes the president of Athens, who being converted by the constancy of one Menas and Eugraphus in their torments, suffered also for the like faith. *Item, Samonas, Gurius, and Abibus, mentioned in Simeon Metaphrastes.* Hieron also, with certain of his confessors, under Maximinus, mentioned in Metaphrastes. Judes and Domnas, who suffered with many other martyrs above mentioned at Nicomedia, as recordeth Metaphrastes. Euclasius, Maximinus, the emperor's officers, whom Fausta the virgin in her torments converted. Also Thirfus, Lucius, Callinicius, Apollonius, Philemon, Asilas, Leonides, with Arrianus, president of Thebaide, Cyprianus likewise, a citizen of Antioch,

tiach, who after he had continued a long time a filthy magician or forcerer, at length was converted and made a deacon, then a priest, and at last the bishop of Antioch, *Vincent. lib. 12. cap. 120.* of whom partly we touched somewhat before. This Cyprian, with Justina a virgin, suffered among the martyrs. *Item*, Glicerius at Nicomedia, Felix a minister, Fortunatus, Achilleus, deacons in the city of Valent, Arthemius of Rome, Ciriacus deacon to Marcellus the bishop, Carpophorus priest at Thufcia, with Abundus his deacon. *Item*, Claudius, Sirinus, Antoninus, which suffered with Marcellinus the bishop. *Sabel. Enead. lib. 8.* Cucufatus in the city of Barcinona. Felix bishop of Apulia, with Adauctus and Jenuarius his priest, Fortunatus and Septimus his readers, who suffered in the city Venusina under Dioclesian. *Bergom. lib. 8.*

It were too long a travel or trouble to recite all and singular names of them particularly, whom this persecution of Dioclesian did consume. The number of whom being almost infinite, is not to be collected or expressed. One story yet remaineth not to be forgotten of Cassianus, whose pitiful story being described of Prudentius, we have here inserted, rendering metre for metre, as followeth.

**T**Hrough Forum, as in Italy, I passed once to Rome,  
 Into a church by chance came I, and stood fast by a tomb.  
 Which church sometime a place had been, where causes great in  
 law  
 Were scan'd and tried, and judgment given, to keep brute men in  
 This place Sylla Cornelius first built, he rais'd the frame; (awe.  
 And call'd the same Forum; and thus that city took the name.  
 In prayer fervent as I stood, casting mine eye aside,  
 A picture in full piteous mood (imbrued) by chance I spy'd;  
 A thousand wounded marks full bad, all mangled, rent, and torn;  
 The skin appear'd as though it had been jagg'd and prickt with  
 thorn.  
 A scull of pictured boys did band, about that loathsome sight,  
 That with their sharpened gads in hand, his members thus had  
 dight.  
 These gads were but their pens, wherewith their tables written  
 And such as scholars often sit, unto the schools do bear. (were,  
 Whom

Whom thou seest here thus pictur'd sit, and firmly dost behold,  
 No fable is, I do thee wit, unaskt a prelate told  
 That walk thereby; but doth declare the history of one, (agone:  
 Which written, would good record bear, what faith was long  
 A skilful schoolmaster this was, that here sometime did teach;  
 The bishop once of Brixia was, and Christ full plain did preach.  
 He knew well how to comprehend long talk in a few lines;  
 And it at length how to amend, by order and by times. (fear;  
 His sharp precepts and his stern looks, his beardless boys did  
 When hate in heart, (yet for their books), full deadly they did  
 bear.

The child that learns, I do ye wit, terms ay his tutor cru'l;  
 No discipline in youth seems sweet, count this a common rule.  
 Behold, the raging time now here, oppressing so the faith,  
 Doth persecute God's children dear, and all that Christ bewray'th.  
 This trusty teacher of the swarm, professeth the living God; (rod.  
 The chief good thing they count their harm, perhaps he shakes his  
 What rebel (askt the president) is he I hear so loud?  
 Unto our youth an instrument, they say, and low they bow'd.  
 Go, bring the caitiff forth, he bids, and make no long delay;  
 Let him be set the boys amids: they do as he doth say.  
 Let him be given unto them all, and let them have their will,  
 To do to him what spight they shall, so that they will him kill.  
 Even as they list let them him fray, and him deride so long,  
 Till weariness provokes their play, no longer to prolong. (skin;  
 Let them, I say, then uncontroul'd, both prick and scotch his  
 To bath their hands let them be bold, in the hot blood of him.  
 The scholars hereat make great game, it pleaseth them full well;  
 That they may kill and quench the flame, they thought to them a  
 hell.

They bind his hands behind his back, and naked they him strip;  
 In bodkin wise at him they nack, they laugh to see him skip.  
 The private hate that each one hath in heart, it now appears;  
 They pour it forth in gaudy wrath, they wreak them of their tears.  
 Some cast great stones, some other break their tables on his face;  
 Lo, here thy Latin and thy Greek, (Oh barren boys of grace),  
 The blood runs down his cheeks, and doth imbrue the boxen leams;  
 Where notes by them were made, (though loath), and well pro-  
 poned themes. (withal;

Some whet, some sharp their pencils points serving to write  
 Some other gage his flesh and joints, as with a pointed nall.

Sometimes



Sometime they prick, sometime they rent, this worthy martyr's  
And thus by turns they do torment this confessor afresh. (flesh;  
Now all with one consent on him their bloody hands they lay;  
To see the blood from limb to limb drop down they make a play.  
More painful was the pricking pang, of children oft and thick,  
Than of the bigger boys that stang, and near the heart did stick.  
For by the feeble strokes of th'one, death was denied his will;  
Of smart that made him wo begon, he had the better skill.  
The deeper strokes the great ones gave, and nearer toucht the  
quick, (sick.

The welcomer he thought the same, whom longing death made  
God make you strong, he saith, I pray, God give you might at  
And what you want in years, I say, let cruelty fulfil. (will;  
But whilst the hangman breatheth still, and me with you doth  
match,

That weakly work, yet want no will, my life for to dispatch;  
My griefs wax great: what groan'st thou now? said some of  
them again, (pain?

In school, advised well art thou, whom there thou put'st to  
Behold we pray, and now make good, as many thousand stripes;  
As when with weeping eyes we stood, in danger of thy gripes.  
Art thou now angry at thy band, that always criedst, Write, write,  
And never wouldst that our right hand should rest in quiet plite?  
We had forgot our playing times, thou churl deniedst us of. (scoff:  
We now but prick and point our lines, and thus they grin and  
Correct, good Sir, your view'd verse, if ought amiss there be;  
Now use thy power, and then rehearse, that have not marked thee.  
Christ pitying this groaning man, with torments to'n and tired,  
Commands his heart to break even then, and life that was then  
hired,

He yields again to him that gave, and thus he makes exchange;  
Immortal for mortal to have, that in such pain did range.

This is, saith he, that this picture, thou so behold'st, Oh guest,  
Of Cassianus martyr pure, doth preach I do protest.

If thou prudence have ought in store, in piety to deal,  
In hope of just reward therefore, now shew thy loving zeal.

I could not but consent, I weep, his tomb I do embrace;  
Home I return, and after sleep, this pitiful preface

I write as a memorial, for ever to endure,  
Of Cassianus schoolmaster, all others to allure

To constancy under the cross, of their profession;

Accounting gain whatever loss for Christ they take upon.

No less admirable than wonderful was the constancy also of women and maidens, who in the same persecution gave their bodies to the torments, and their lives for the testimony of Christ, with no less boldness of spirit, than did the men themselves above specified, to whom how much more inferior they were of bodily strength, so much more worthy of praise they be, for their constant standing. Of whom some examples here we mind (Christ willing) to infer, such as in our stories and chronicles seem most notable, first beginning with Eulalia, whose story we have taken out of the foresaid Prudentius, as followeth.

In the west part of Spain, called Portugal, is a city great and populous, named Emerita, wherein dwelt, and was brought up a virgin, born of noble parentage, whose name was Eulalia; which Emerita, although for the situation thereof was both rich and famous, yet more adorned and famous was the renown thereof, by the martyrdom, blood, and sepulchre of this blessed virgin Eulalia. Twelve years of age was she, and not much above, when she refused great and honourable offers in marriage, as one not skilful, nor yet delighting in courtly dalliance, neither yet taking pleasure in purple and gorgeous apparel, or else in precious balms, or costly ornaments and jewels; but forsaking and despising all these, and such like pompous allurements, then shewed she herself most busy in preparing her journey to her hoped inheritance, and heavenly patronage. Which Eulalia, as she was modest and discreet in behaviour, sage and sober in conditions, so was she also witty and sharp in answering her enemies. But when the furious rage of persecution enforced her to join herself amongst God's children in the household of faith, and when the Christians were commanded to offer incense and sacrifice to devils or dead gods; then began the blessed spirit of Eulalia to kindle, and being of a prompt and ready wit, thought forthwith (as a courageous captain) to give a charge upon this so great and disordered a battle: and so she, silly woman, pouring out the bowels of her innocent heart before God, more provoketh thereby the force and rage of her enemies against her. But the godly care of her parents, fearing lest the willing mind of this damsel, so ready to die for Christ's cause,

cause, might make her guilty of her own death, hid her and kept her close at their house in the country, being a great way out of the city. She yet misliking that quiet life, as also detesting to make such delay, softly stealeth out of the doors, (no man knowing thereof), in the night; and in great haste leaving the common way, openeth the hedge-gaps, and with weary feet, (God knoweth), passed through the thorny and briery places, accompanied yet with spiritual guard; and although dark and dreadful was the silent night, yet had she with her the Lord and guider of light. And as the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, had, by the mighty power of God, a cloudy pillar for their guide in the day, and a flame of fire in the night; so had this godly virgin, travelling in this dark night, when she flying and forsaking the place where all filthy idolatry abounded, and hastened her heavenly journey, was not oppressed with the dreadful darkness of the night; but yet she, before the day appeared, in this her speedy journey, with herself considered and mused on a thousand matters and more.

In the morning betime, with a bold courage she goeth unto the tribunal or judgment-seat, and in the midst of them all with a loud voice crying out, said, I pray you what a shame is it for you thus rashly, and without advisement, to destroy and kill mens souls, and to throw their bodies alive against the rocks, and cause them to deny the omnipotent God? Would you know (O you unfortunate) what I am? Behold, I am one of the Christians, an enemy to your devilish sacrifices, I spurn your idols under my feet, I confess God omnipotent with my heart and mouth. Isis, Apollo, and Venus, what are they? Maximinus himself, what is he? The one a thing of nought, for that they be the works of mens hands; the other but a cast-away, because he worshippeth the same work. Therefore frivolous are they both, and both not worthy to be set by. Maximinus is a lord of substance, and yet he himself falleth down before a stone, and voweth the honour of his dignity unto those that are much inferior to his vassals. Why then doth he oppress so tyrannically more worthy stomachs and courages than himself? He must needs be a good guide and



an upright judge, which feedeth upon innocent blood, and breathing in the bodies of godly men, doth rent and tear their bowels; and that more is, hath his delight in destroying and subverting the faith.

Go to therefore, thou hangman, burn, cut, and mangle thou these earthly members. It is an easy matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind shalt thou not hurt for any thing thou canst do. The pretor then, or judge, with these words of hers, set in a great rage, faith, Hangman, take her and pull her out by the hair of her head, and torment her to the uttermost; let her feel the power of our country-gods, and let her know what the imperial government of a prince is. But yet, O thou sturdy girl, fain would I have thee, (if it were possible), before thou die, to revoke this thy wickedness. Behold what pleasures thou mayst enjoy by the honourable house thou camest of, thy fallen house and progeny followeth thee to death with lamentable tears, and the heavy nobility of thy kindred maketh doleful lamentation for thee. What meanest thou? Wilt thou kill thyself so young a flower, and so near these honourable marriages and great dowries thou mayst enjoy? Doth not the glistering and golden pomp of the bride-bed move thee? Doth not the reverend piety of thine ancestors prick thee? Whom is it not, but that this thy rashness and weakness grieveth? Behold here the furniture ready prepared for thy terrible death: either shalt thou be beheaded with this sword, or else with these wild beasts shalt thou be pulled in pieces, or else thou being cast into the fiery flames, shall be (although lamentably bewailed of thy friends and kinsfolks) consumed to ashes. What great matter is it for thee, I pray thee, to escape all this? If thou wilt but take and put with thy fingers a little salt and incense into the censers, thou shalt be delivered from all these punishments. To this Eulalia made no answer, but being in a great fury, she spitteth in the tyrant's face, she throweth down the idols, and spurneth abroad with her feet the heap of incense prepared to the censers. Then, without further delay, the hangmen with both their strengths took her, and pulled one joint from another, and with the talons of wild beasts scotched her sides to the hard bones; she

she all this while singing and praising God in this wise; Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee; what a pleasure is it for them, O Christ, that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto these high dignities, and still call-eth upon that holy name, all stained and imbrued with her own blood. This sang she with a bold stomach, neither lamentingly nor yet weepingly, but being glad and merry, abandoning from her mind all heaviness and grief, when as out of a warm fountain her mangled members with fresh blood bathed her white and fair skin. Then proceed they to the last and final torment, which was not only the going and wounding of her mangled body with the iron grate and hurdle, and terrible harrowing of her flesh, but burned on every side with flaming torches her tormented breasts and sides; her hair hanging about her shoulders in two parts divided, (wherewith her shamefaced chastity and virginity was covered), reached down to the ground. But when the cracking flame fleeth about her face, kindled by her hair, and reacheth the crown of her head; then she desiring swift death, opened her mouth and swallowed the flame, and so rested she in peace.

Then said Prudentius and Ado, also Equilinus add, moreover, writing of a white dove issuing out of her mouth at her departing, and of the fire quenched about her body, also of her body covered miraculously with snow, with other things more, whereof let every reader use his own judgment.

As ye have heard now the Christian life, and constant death of Eulalia, much worthy of praise and commendation; so no less commendation is worthy to be given to blessed Agnes, that constant damsel and martyr of God, who as she was in Rome of honourable parents begotten, so lieth she there as honourably intombed and buried. Which Agnes, for her unspotted and undefiled virginity, deserved no less praise and commendation, than for her willing death and martyrdom. Some writers make of her a long discourse, more in my judgment than necessary, reciting divers and sundry strange miracles by her done in the process of her history; which partly for tediousness, partly for the doubtfulness of the author, (whom some father upon

Ambrose), and partly for the strangeness and incredibility thereof, I omit, being satisfied with that which Prudentius briefly writeth of her, as followeth: She was (saith he) young and not marriageable, when first she being dedicated to Christ, boldly resisted the wicked edicts of the emperor; lest that through idolatry she might have denied and forsaken the holy faith; but yet first proved by divers and sundry policies to induce her to the same, (as now with the flattering and enticing words of the judge, now with the threatenings of the storming executioner), she stood notwithstanding stedfast in all courageous strength; and willingly offered her body to hard and painful torments, not refusing (as she said) to suffer whatsoever it should be, yea, though it were death itself. Then said the cruel tyrant, If to suffer pain and torment be so easy a matter, and lightly regarded of thee, and that thou accountest thy life nothing worth; yet the shame of thy dedicated or vowed virginity is a thing more regarded I know, and esteemed of thee. Wherefore this is determined, that unless thou wilt make obeisance to the altar of Minerva, and ask forgiveness of her for thy arrogancy, thou shalt be sent or abandoned to the common stews or brothel-house. Agnes the virgin with more spirit than vehemency inveigheth against both Minerva and her virginity; the youth in skulls flock and run together, and crave that they may have Agnes their ludibrious prey. Then saith Agnes, Christ is not forgetful of those that be his, that he will suffer violently to be taken from them their golden and pure chastity, neither will he leave them so destitute of help; he is always at hand, and ready to fight for such as are shamefaced and chaste virgins, neither suffereth he his gifts of holy integrity or chastity to be polluted. Thou shalt, saith she, willingly bath thy sword in my blood if thou wilt, but thou shalt not defile my body with filthy lust for any thing thou canst do. She had no sooner spoken these words, but he commanded that she should be set naked at the corner of some street, (which place at that time, such as were strumpets commonly used), the greater part of the multitude both sorrowing and shaming to see so shameless a sight, went their ways, some turning their heads, some hiding their faces.



faces. But one amongst the rest, with uncircumcised eyes beholding the damsel, and that in such opprobrious wise; behold, a flame of fire like unto a flash of lightning falleth upon him, and striketh his eyes out of his head; whereupon he for dead falling unto the ground, sprawleth in the kennel-dirt; whose companions taking him up, and carrying him alway, bewailed him as a dead man; but the virgin, for this her miraculous delivery from the danger and shame of that place, singeth praises to God and Christ.

There be (saith Prudentius) that report, how that she being desired to pray unto Christ for the party, that a little before, with fire from heaven, for his incontineny was stricken, was restored by her prayer both unto his perfect health and sight. But blessed Agnes, after that she had climbed this her first greeze and step unto the heavenly palace, forthwith began to climb another; for fury ingendering now the mortal wrath of her bloody enemy, wringing his hands, he crieth out, saying, I am undone, O thou the executioner draw out thy sword, and do thine office that the emperor hath appointed thee. And when Agnes saw a sturdy and cruel fellow (to behold) stand behind her, or approaching near to her with a naked sword in his hand; I am now gladder, saith she, and rejoyce, that such a one as thou, being a stout, fierce, strong, and sturdy soldier art come, than one more feeble, weak, and faint should come, or else any other young man sweetly embalmed, and wearing gay apparel, that might destroy me with funeral-shame. This, even this is he, I now confess, that I do love. I will make haste to meet him, and will no longer protract my longing desire. I will willingly receive into my paps the length of his sword, and into my breasts will draw the force thereof even unto the hilts, that thus I being married unto Christ my spouse, may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world, that reacheth even unto the skies. O eternal Governor, vouchsafe to open the gates of heaven, once shut up against all the inhabitants of the earth, and receive (Oh Christ) my soul that seeketh thee. Thus speaking and kneeling upon her knees, she prayeth unto Christ above in heaven, that her neck might be the readier for the sword, now hanging over the same. The executioner

tioner then with his bloody hand finished her hope, and at one stroke cutteth off her head, and by such short and swift death doth he prevent her of the pain thereof.

I have oftentimes before complained, that the stories of saints have been powdered and sauced with divers untrue additions, and fabulous inventions of men, who, either of a superstitious devotion, or of a subtle practice, have so mingle-mangled their stories and lives, that almost nothing remaineth in them simple and uncorrupt, as in the usual portues, wont to be read for daily service, is manifest and evident to be seen; wherein few legends there be able to abide the touch of history, if they were truly tried. This I write upon the occasion specially of good Katharine, whom now I have in hand, in whom although I nothing doubt, but in her life was great holiness, in her knowledge excellency, in her death constancy; yet that all things be true that be storied of her, neither dare I affirm, neither am I bound so to think: so many strange fictions of her be feigned diversly of divers writers, whereof some seem incredible, some also impudent. As where *Petrus de natalibus*, lib. 10. writing of her conversion, declareth, how that Katharine sleeping before a certain picture or table of the crucifix, Christ, with his mother Mary, appeared unto her; and when Mary had offered her unto Christ to be his wife, he first refused her for her blackness. The next time she being baptized, Mary appearing again, offered her to marry with Christ, who then being liked, was espoused to him and married, having a golden ring the same time put on her finger in her sleep, &c. Bergomensis writeth thus, That because she in the sight of the people openly resisted the emperor Maxentius to his face, and rebuked him for his cruelty, therefore she was commanded and committed upon the same to prison, which seemeth hitherto not much to digress from truth. It followeth, moreover, that the same night an angel came to her, comforting and exhorting her to be strong and constant unto the martyrdom, for that she was a maid accepted in the sight of God, and that the Lord would be with her for whose honour she did fight, and that he would give her a mouth and wisdom which her enemies should not withstand, with many other things more,

more, which I here omit. As this also I omit concerning the fifty philosophers, whom she in disputation convicted, and converted unto our religion, and died martyrs for the same. *Item*, Of the converting of Porphyrius, kinsman to Maxentius, and Faustina the emperor's wife. At length, (saith the story), after she proved the rack, and the four sharp cutting wheels, having at last her head cut off with the sword, so she finished her martyrdom, about the year of our Lord (as Antoninus affirmeth) three hundred and ten. Simeon Metaphrastes, writing of her, discourseth the same more at large, to whom they may resort which covet more therein to be satisfied.

Among the works of Basil, a certain oration is extant concerning Julitta the martyr, who came to her martyrdom (as he witnesseth) by this occasion. A certain avaricious and greedy person of great authority, and (as it may appear) the emperor his deputy, or other like officer, (who abused the decrees and laws of the emperor against the Christians, to his own lucre and gain), violently took from this Julitta all her goods, lands, chattels, and servants, contrary to all equity and right. She made her pitiful complaint to the judges; a day was appointed when the cause should be heard. The spoiled woman, and the spoiling extortioner stood forth together; the woman lamentably declareth her cause, the man frowningly beholdeth her face. When she had proved, that of good right the goods were her own, and that wrongfully he had dealt with her; the wicked and blood-thirsty wretch preferring vile worldly substance, before the precious substance of a Christian body, affirmed her action to be of no force, for that she was an outlaw, in not observing the emperor's gods, since her Christian faith hath been first abjured. His allegation was allowed as good and reasonable. Whereupon incense and fire were prepared for her to worship the gods, which unless she would do, neither the emperor's protection, nor laws, nor judgment, nor life should she enjoy in that commonwealth. When this handmaid of the Lord heard these words, she said, Farewell life, welcome death; farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I rather lose, than to speak  
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one wicked and blasphemous word against God my Creator. I yield thee thanks most hearty, O my God, for this gift of grace, that I can contemn and despise this frail and transitory world, esteeming Christian profession above all treasures. Henceforth when any question was demanded, her answer was, I am the servant of Jesus Christ. Her kindred and acquaintance flocking to her, advertised her to change her mind. But that vehemently she refused, with detestation of their idolatry. Forthwith the judge, with the sharp sword of sentence, not only cutteth off all her goods and possessions, but judgeth her also to the fire most cruelly. The joyful martyr embraceth the sentence as a thing most sweet and delectable. She addresseth herself to the flames, in countenance, gesture, and words, declaring the joy of her heart, coupled with singular constancy. To the women beholding her, sententiously she spake; Stick not, O sisters, to labour and travel after true piety and godliness. Cease to accuse the fragility of feminine nature. What, are not we created of the same matter that men are? yea, after God's image and similitude are we made, as lively as they. Not flesh only God used in the creation of the woman, in sign and token of her infirmity and weakness, but bone of bone is she, in token that she must be strong in the true and living God, all false gods forsaken; constant in faith, all infidelity renounced; patient in adversity, all worldly ease refused. Wax weary (my dear sisters) of your lives led in darkness, and be in love with my Christ, my God, my Redeemer, my Comforter, which is the true light of the world. Persuade yourselves, or rather the Spirit of the living God persuade you, that there is a world to come, wherein the worshippers of idols and devils shall be tormented perpetually, the servants of the high God shall be crowned eternally. With these words she embraced the fire, and sweetly slept in the Lord.

There have been, moreover, beside these above recited, divers godly women and faithful martyrs; as Barbara a noblewoman in Thuscia, who after miserable prisonment sharp cords, and burning flames put to her sides, was at last beheaded. Also Fausta the virgin which suffered under

der Maximinus, by whom Euelasius, a ruler of the emperor's palace, and Maximinus the president, were both converted, and also suffered martyrdom, as witnesseth Metaphrastes. *Item*, Juliana, a virgin of singular beauty in Nicomedia, who after divers agonies suffered likewise under Maximinus. *Item*, Anasia, a maid of Thessalonica, who under the said Maximinus suffered, *Metaph. ibid.* Justina which suffered with Cyprianus bishop of Antioch; not to omit also Tecla; although most writers do record, that she suffered under Nero. *Platina in vita Caii* maketh also mention of Lucia and Agatha. All which holy maids and virgins glorified the Lord Christ with their constant martyrdom, in this tenth and last persecution of Dioclesian.

During the time of which persecution, these bishops of Rome succeeded one after another; Caius, who succeeded next after Xistus before mentioned; Marcellinus, Marcellus, (of whom Eusebius in his story maketh no mention); Eusebius, and then Miltiades; all which died martyrs in the tempest of this persecution. First, Marcellinus, after the martyrdom of Caius, was ordained bishop; he being brought by Dioclesian to the idols, first yielded to their idolatry, and was seen to sacrifice: wherefore being excommunicated by the Christians, he fell into such repentance, that he returned again to Dioclesian, where he standing to his former confession, and publicly condemning the idolatry of the Heathen, recovered the crown of martyrdom, suffering with Claudius, Cyrinus, and Antoninus.

Marcellus likewise was urged of Maxentius to renounce his bishopric and religion, and to sacrifice with them to idols; which when he constantly refused, was beaten with cudgels, and so expelled the city. Then he entering into the house of Lucina a widow, assembled there the congregation; which when it came to the ears of Maxentius the tyrant, he turned the house of Lucina into a stable, and made Marcellus the keeper of the beasts; who with the stink thereof, and miserable handling, was put to death. Eusebius sat bishop of Rome, as *Euseb. in Chron.* saith, seven months, Marianus Scotus saith eight months, Damasus affirmeth six years. Sabellicus alledgeth certain authors that

say, that he was slain by Maximianus, but correcteth that himself, affirming that Maximianus died before him.

Miltiades, by the testimony of Platina, and others that follow him, sat three years and seven months; and suffered under Maximianus. But that seemeth not to be true, as both Sabellicus doth rightly note, *Sabel. Ænead. 7. lib. 8.* affirming that the same cannot stand by the supputation of time; for so much as the said Galerius Maximianus reigned but two years, and died before Miltiades. Also Eusebius manifestly expresseth the example of a letter of Constantine written to this Miltiades bishop of Rome, plainly convicting that to be false which Platina affirmeth.

In the book collected of general councils, among the decretal-epistles, there is a long tractation about the judgment and condemnation of Marcellinus; whereof the masters and patrons of Popery in these our days take great hold to prove the supremacy of the pope to be above all general councils; and that he ought not to be subject to the condemnation of any person or persons, for that there is written, *Nemo unquam judicavit pontificem, nec præsul sacerdotem suum, quoniam prima sedes non judicabitur a quoquam, &c.* Although this sentence of Miltiades seemeth apparently to be patched in rather by some Heldibrandus than by Miltiades, both for that it hangeth with little order of sense upon that which goeth before; and again, because that *Prima sedes* here mentioned, was not yet ordained nor attributed to the see of Rome before the council of Nice, where the order and placing of bishops was first established. But to let this sentence pass, yet notwithstanding the circumstance and proceeding of this judgment, if it be rightly weighed, maketh very little to the purpose of these men. Neither is it true, that the bishops of this council of Sinuesse, did not condemn Marcellinus, for the words of the council be plain; *Subscripserunt igitur in ejus damnationem & damnaverunt eum extra civitatem*; that is, "They subscribed therefore to his condemnation, and condemned him to be expelled out of the city." Moreover, by the said council were brought in the forty-two witnesses against Marcellinus. In the said council, the verdict of the same witnesses was demanded, and also received. Furthermore, Quirinus,



Quirinus, one of the bishops there, openly protested, that he would not depart the council, before the malice of the bishops was revealed. What doth all this declare, but that the bishop of Rome was called there, and did appear before the judgment-seat of the council, and there stood subject to their sentence and authority, by the which he was expelled out of the city? As for the words of the council, whereupon our Papists stand so much, *Non enim nostro, sed tuo ipsius judicio condemnaberis, &c. Item, Tuo ore judica causam tuam, &c.* These words import not here the authority of the Roman bishop to be above the council; neither do they declare what the council could not do, but what they would and wished rather to be done; that is, that he should rather acknowledge his crime before God and them, with a voluntary yielding of his heart, than that the confession of such an heinous fact should be extorted from him through their condemnation, for that they saw to be expedient for his soul's health; otherwise their condemnation should serve him to small purpose; and so it came to pass. For he being urged of them to condemn himself, so did; prostrating himself and weeping before them. Whereupon immediately they proceeded to the sentence against him, condemning and pronouncing him to be expelled the city. Now, whether by this may be gathered, that the bishop of Rome ought not to be cited, accused, and condemned by any person or persons, let the indifferent reader judge simply.

As touching the decretal-epistles, which be intituled under the names of these foresaid bishops, whose well adviseth them, and with judgment will examine the stile, the time, the argument, the hanging together of the matter, and the constitutions in them contained, (little serving to any purpose, and nothing serving for those troublesome days then present), may easily discern them either in no part to be theirs, or much of the same to be clouted and patched by the doings of others, which lived in other times, especially seeing all the constitutions in them, for the most part, tend to the setting up, and to exalt the see of Rome above all other bishops and churches, and to reduce all causes and appeals to the said see of Rome. So the epistle

of Caius, beginning with the commendation of the authority of his see, endeth after the same tenor, willing and commanding all difficult questions in all provinces whatsoever emerging, to be referred to the see-apostolical. Moreover, the greatest part of the said epistle from this place (*Quicunque illi sunt, ita obcecati, &c.* to the end of this period, *Quoniam sicut ait B. apostolus, magnum est pietatis, &c.*) is contained in the epistle of Leo unto Leo the emperor; and so rightly agreeth in all points with the stile of Leo, that evident it is the same to be borrowed out of Leo, and to be patched into the epistle of Caius out of Leo.

Likewise the epistle of Marcellinus, to get more authority with the reader, is admired with a great part of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, word for word. And how is it like that Marcellinus, which died in the twentieth year of Dioclesian, could write of consubstantiality of the divine persons, when that controversy and term of consubstantiality was not heard of in the church before the Nicene council, which was twenty-three years after him? But especially the two epistles of Marcellus bewray themselves, so that for the confuting thereof needeth no other probation more than only the reading of the same. Such a glorious stile of ambition therein doth appear, as it is easy to be understood, not to proceed either from such an humble martyr, or to favour any thing of the misery of such a time. His words of his first epistle written unto the brethren of Antioch, and alledged in the pope's decrees by Gratianus, are these.

“ We desire you, brethren, that you do not teach nor conceive any other thing but as ye have received of the blessed apostle St Peter, and of other apostles and fathers: for of him ye were first of all instructed, wherefore you must not forsake your own father, and follow others. For he is the head of the whole church, to whom the Lord said, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, &c.* Whose seat was first with you in Antioch, which afterward, by the commandment of the Lord, was translated from thence to Rome; of the which church of Rome I am this day placed (by the grace of God) to be the governor. From the which church of Rome, neither ought you to separate yourselves, seeing to the same church all manner of causes ecclesiastical,

ecclesiastical, being of any importance, (God's grace so disposing), are commanded to be referred; by the same to be ordered regularly, from whence they took their first beginning," &c. And followeth consequently upon the same, "And if your church of Antioch, which was once the first, will now yield herself unto the see of Rome, there is no other church else that will not subject itself to our dominion; to whom all other bishops whosoever, as they must needs do, (according to the decrees of the apostles and of their successors), ought to fly, as to have their head, and must appeal to the same, there to have their redress and their protection, from whence they took their first instruction and consecration," &c.

Whether this be like matter to proceed from the spirit of Marcellus that blessed martyr in those so dreadful days, I say no more, but only desire thee (gentle reader) to judge.

In his second epistle, moreover, the said Marcellus writing to Maxentius the bloody tyrant, first reprehendeth him for his cruelty, sharply admonishing him how and what to do; to learn and seek the true religion of God, to maintain his church, to honour and reverence the priests of God, and especially exhorteth him to charity, and that he would cease from persecution, &c. All this is possible and like to be true. But now mark (good reader) what blanched stuff here followeth withal; as where he alledging the statutes and sanctions of his predecessors, declareth and discusseth that no bishop nor minister ought to be persecuted or deprived of his goods. And if they be, then ought they to have their possessions and places again restored by the law, before they were bound by the law to answer to their accusations laid in against them; and so after that, in convenient time, to be called to a council; the which council notwithstanding, without the authority of the holy see, cannot proceed regularly, albeit it remain in his power to assemble certain bishops together. Neither can he regularly condemn any bishop, appealing to this his apostolical see, before the sentence definitive do proceed from the foresaid see, &c. And it followeth after; And therefore (saith he) let no bishop, of what crime soever he be attached, come to his accusation or be heard, but in his own ordinary synod, at his



his convenient time; the regular and apostolical authority being joined withal. Moreover, in the said epistle writing unto Maxentius, he decreeth that no lay-men, or any suspected bishop, ought to accuse prelates of the church; so that if they be either lay-men, or men of evil conversation, or proved manifest enemies, or incensed with any hatred, their accusations against any bishops ought not to stand; with other such matters more, concerning the disposition of judicial court. Which matter, if pope Gregory the seventh had written unto Henry the third emperor, or if pope Alexander the third had written to the emperor Fredericus the first, it might have stood with some reason and opportunity of time. But now for Marcellus to write these decrees in such persecution of the church, to Maxentius the Heathen and most cruel emperor, how unlike it is to be true, and how it served then to purpose, the reader may soon discern. And yet these be the epistles and constitutions decretal, whereby (under the pretended title of the fathers) all churches of late time, and all ecclesiastical causes have been, and yet are in this realm of England to this day governed, directed, and disposed.

The like discussion and examination I might also make of the other epistles that follow of Eusebius and Miltiades, which all tend to the same scope, that no prelate or bishop ought to come to his answer (or *ad litem contestatam*, as the words of their writing do term it) before they be orderly and fully restored again to their possessions. Who, moreover, in the said their epistles still harp upon this key of the scripture, *Tu es Petrus, & super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam*. Declaring, moreover, that this privilege of judging all men, and to be judged of no man, but only to be left to the judgment of the Lord, was given to this foresaid holy see of Rome, from the time of the apostles, and chiefly left with Peter the holy key-keeper; so that although the election of the apostles was equal, yet this was chiefly granted to St Peter, to have pre-eminence above the rest. Concluding in the end hereby, *Quod semper majores cause, sicut sunt Episcoporum, & potiorum cura negotiorum, ad unam beati principis apostolorum Petri sedem confluerent*; that is, "That always all greater causes, as be the matters

matters of bishops, and such other cares of weighty importance, should be brought to the see of St Peter, the blessed prince of the apostles," &c. These be the words of Miltiades and Eusebius, whereby it may partly be smelled of him that hath any nose, what was the meaning of them which forged these writings and letters upon these ancient holy martyrs.

This I cannot but marvel at, in the third epistle of Eusebius the bishop of Rome, that whereas Marcellinus his late predecessor before, in his own time and remembrance, did fall so horribly, and was condemned for the same justly to be expelled the city by the council of three hundred bishops; yet notwithstanding, the foresaid Eusebius, in his third epistle, alledging that place of *Tu es Petrus*, bringeth in for a proof of the same, and saith, *Quia in sede apostolica extra maculam semper est catholica servata religio*, &c.; that is; "For in the apostolical see always the catholic religion hath been preserved without any spot or blemish."

But howsoever the forgers of these decretal-epistles have forgotten themselves, most certain it is, that these holy bishops, unto whom they were and are ascribed, lived perfect good men, and died blessed martyrs. Of whom this Miltiades was the last among all the bishops of Rome here in the west church of Europe, that ever was in danger of persecution to be martyred, yet to this present day.

And thus have ye heard the stories and names of such blessed saints, which suffered in the time of persecution, from the nineteenth year of Dioclesian, to the seventh and last year of Maxentius, described; with the deaths also and plagues upon these tormentors and cruel tyrants which were the captains of the same persecution. And here cometh in (blessed be Christ) the end of these persecutions here in these west churches of Europe, so far as the dominion of blessed Constantinus did chiefly extend.

Yet notwithstanding in Asia all persecution as yet ceased not for the space of four years, as above is mentioned, by the means of wicked Licinius, under whom divers there were holy and constant martyrs, that suffered grievous torments; as Hermilus a deacon, and Stratonicus a keeper of the prison, both which, after their punishments sustained,

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were strangled in the flood Ister. *Metast.* Also Theodorus the captain, who being sent for of Licinius, because he would not come, and because he brake his gods in pieces, and gave them to the poor, therefore was fastened to the cross, and after being pierced with sharp pricks or bodkins in the secret parts of his body, was at last beheaded. Add to these also Miles, who being first a soldier, was afterward made bishop of a certain city in Persia; where he seeing himself could do no good to convert them, after many tribulations and great afflictions among them, cursed the city, and departed. Which city shortly after, by Saporess king of Persia, was destroyed.

In the same country of Persia, about this time suffered under Saporess the king (as recordeth Simeon Metasthenes) divers valiant and constant martyrs, as Acindimus, Pegasus, Anempodistus, Epidephorus, also Simeon archbishop of Seleucia, with Etesiphon another bishop in Persia, with other ministers and religious men of that region, to the number of one hundred twenty-eight. Of this Simeon and Etesiphon thus writeth Sozomenus, *lib. 2. cap. 8. 9. 10.* That the idolatrous magicians in Persia, taking council together against the Christians, accused Simeon and Etesiphon to Saporess the king, for that they were grateful and accepted unto the Roman emperor, and bewrayed to him such things as were done in the land of Persia. Whereupon Saporess being moved, took great displeasure against the Christians, oppressing them with taxes and tributes unto their utter impoverishing, killing all their priests with the sword; after that calleth for Simeon the archbishop, who there before the king declared himself a worthy and a valiant captain of Christ's church. For when Saporess had commanded him to be led to suffer torments, he neither shrunk for any fear, nor shewed any great humble suit of submission for any pardon; whereat the king partly marvelling, partly offended, asked why he did not kneel down as he was wont before to do? Simeon to this answered; For that, saith he, before this time I was not brought unto you in bonds to betray the true God, as I am now; and so long I refused not to accomplish that which the order and custom of the realm of me required; but now  
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It is not lawful for me so to do, for now I come to stand in defence of our religion and true doctrine. When Simeon thus had answered, the king persisting in his purpose, offereth to him the choice either to worship with him after his manner, (promising to him many great gifts, if he would so do), or if he would not, threateneth to him, and to all the other Christians within his land, destruction. But Simeon, neither allured with his promises, nor terrified with his threatenings, continued constant in his doctrine professed, so as neither he could be induced to idolatrous worship, nor yet to betray the truth of his religion. For the which cause he was committed into bonds, and there commanded to be kept, to the king's pleasure further known.

It befel in the way as he was going to the prison, there was sitting at the king's gate a certain eunuch, an old tutor or schoolmaster of the king's, named Usthazares, who had been once a Christian, and afterward falling from his profession, fell with the Heathenish multitude to their idolatry. This Usthazares sitting at the door of the king's palace, and seeing Simeon passing by led to the prison, rose up and revered the bishop. Simeon again with sharp words (as the time would suffer) rebuked him, and in great anger cried out against him, which being once a Christian, would so cowardly revolt from his profession, and to return again to the Heathenish idolatry. At the hearing of these words the eunuch forthwith bursting out into tears, laying away his courtly apparel, which was sumptuous and costly, and putting upon him a black and mourning weed, sitteth before the court-gates weeping and bewailing, thus saying with himself: Wo is me, with what hope, with what face shall I look hereafter for my God, which have denied my God, when as this Simeon, my familiar acquaintance, thus passing by me, so much disdaineth me, that he refuseth with one gentle word to salute me?

These words being brought to the ears of the king, (as such tale-carriers never lack in princes courts), procured against him no little indignation. Whereupon Sapore the king sending for him, first with gentle words and courtly promises be-

gan to speak him fair, asking him, what cause he had so to mourn? and whether there was any thing in his house, which was denied him, or which he had not at his own will and asking? Whereunto Usthazares answering again said, That there was nothing in that earthly house, which was to him lacking, or whereunto his desire stood. Yea, would God, (said he), O king, any other grief or calamity in all the world, whatsoever it were, had happened to me rather than this, for the which I do most justly mourn and sorrow! For this sorroweth me, that I am this day alive, who should rather have died long since, and that I see this sun which against my heart and mind, for your pleasure, dissemblingly I appeared to worship; for which cause double wise I am worthy of death. First, for that I have denied Christ; secondly, because I did dissemble with you. And incontinent upon these words, swearing by him that made both heaven and earth, affirmed most certainly, that although he had played the fool before, he would never be so mad again, as instead of the Creator and Maker of all things, to worship the creatures which he had made and created. Saporess the king being astonied at the so sudden alteration of this man, and doubting with himself whether to be angry with those inchanters or with him; whether to intreat him with gentleness or with rigour; at length in this mood commanded the said Usthazares, his old ancient servant, and first tutor and bringer up of his youth, to be had away, and to be beheaded. As he was going to the place of execution, he desired of the executioners a little to stay, while he might send a message unto the king, which was this, (sent in by certain of the king's most trusty eunuchs), desiring him, that for all the old and faithful service he had done to his father, and to him, he would now requite him with this one office again, to cause to be cried openly by a public crier in these words following; That Usthazares was beheaded, not for any treachery or crime committed against the king or the realm, but only for that he was a Christian, and would not, at the king's pleasure, deny his God. And so according unto his request, it was performed and granted. For this cause did Usthazares so much desire the cause of his death to be published; because  
that

that as his shrinking back from Christ, was a great occasion to many Christians to do the like ; so now the same, hearing that Ust hazares died for no other cause but only for the religion of Christ, should learn likewise by his example to be fervent and constant in that which they profess. And thus this blessed eunuch did consummate his martyrdom. Of the which his said martyrdom, Simeon being in prison hearing, was very joyful, and gave God thanks ; who, in the next day following, being brought forth before the king, and constantly refusing to condescend unto the king's request, to worship visible creatures, was likewise by the commandment of the king beheaded, with a great number more, which the same day also did suffer, to the number (as is said) of an hundred and more ; all which were put to death before Simeon, he standing by and exhorting them with comfortable words ; admonishing them to stand firm and stedfast in the Lord ; preaching and teaching them concerning death, resurrection, and true piety ; and proved by the scriptures that to be true which he had said ; declaring moreover that to be true life indeed, so to die, and that to be death indeed, to deny or betray God for fear of punishment : and added further, " That there was no man alive, but needs once must die ; for so much as to all men is appointed necessarily here to have an end. But those things, which after this life follow hereafter, to be eternal, which neither shall come to all men after one sort. But as the condition and trade of life in divers men doth differ, and is not in all men like ; so the time shall come, when all men in a moment shall render and receive, according to their doings in this present life, immortal rewards ; such as have here done well, of life and glory ; such as have done contrary, of perpetual punishment. As touching therefore our well-doing, here is no doubt but of all other our holy actions and virtuous deeds, there is no higher or greater deed, than if a man here lose his life for his Lord God." With these words of comfortable exhortation, the holy martyrs being prepared, willingly yielded up their lives to death. After whom at last followed Simeon, with two other priests or ministers of his church, Abedecalaas



and Ananias, which also with him were partakers of the same martyrdom.

At the suffering of those above mentioned, it happened that Pusices, one of the king's officers, and overseer of his artificers, was there present, who seeing Ananias being an aged old father, somewhat to shake and tremble at the sight of them that suffered; O father (said he) a little moment shut thine eyes, and be strong, and shortly thou shalt see the sight of God. Upon these words thus spoken, Pusices immediately was apprehended and brought unto the king, who there confessing himself constantly to be a Christian, and for that he was very bold and hardy before the king in the cause of Christ's faith, was extremely and most cruelly handled in the execution of his martyrdom. For in the upper part of his neck they made a hole to thrust in their hand, and pluckt out his tongue out of his mouth, and so he was put to death. At the which time also the daughter of Pusices, a godly virgin, by the malicious accusation of the wicked, was apprehended and put to death.

The next year following, upon the same day when the Christians did celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's passion, which we call Good-friday before Easter, (as witnesseth the said Sozomenus), Sapores the king directed out a cruel and sharp edict throughout all his land, condemning to death all them whosoever confessed themselves to be Christians. By reason whereof an innumerable multitude of Christians, through the wicked procuring of the malignant magicians, suffered the same time by the sword, both in city and in town; some being fought for, some offering themselves willingly, lest they should seem by their silence to deny Christ. Thus all the Christians, that could be found, without pity were slain, and divers also of the king's own court and household. Amongst whom was also Azades an eunuch, one whom the king did entirely love and favour; which Azades, after that the king understood to be put to death, being greatly moved with the sorrow thereof, commanded after that no Christians to be slain, but them only which were the doctors and teachers of Christian religion.

In the same time it happened that the queen fell into a certain

certain disease; upon the occasion whereof, the cruel Jews, with the wicked magicians, falsely and maliciously accused Trabula, the sister of Simeon the martyr, a godly virgin, with another sister also of hers, that they had wrought privy charms to hurt the queen, for the revenging of the death of Simeon. This accusation being received and believed, innocent Trabula, with the others were condemned, and with a saw cut in sunder by the middle; whose quarters were then hanged upon stakes, the queen going between them, thinking thereby to be delivered of her sickness. This Trabula was a maid of a right comely beauty and very amiable, to whom one of the magicians cast great love, much desiring and labouring, by gifts and rewards sent into the prison, to win her to his pleasure, promising that if she would apply to his request, she should be delivered and set at liberty. But she utterly refusing to consent unto him, or rather rebuking him for his incontinent attempt, did choose rather to die, then to betray either the religion of her mind, or the virginity of her body. *Sozom. lib. 2. cap. 13.*

Now, for so much as the king had commanded that no Christians should be put to death, but only such as were the teachers and leaders of the flock; the magicians and archmagicians left no diligence untried to set forward the matter. Whereby great affliction and persecution was among the bishops and teachers of the church, which in all places went to slaughter, especially in the country of Diobenor; for that part of Persia above all other, was most Christian. Where Acepſimas the bishop, with a great number of his flock and clergy, were apprehended and taken; upon the apprehension of whom, the magicians, to satisfy the king's commandment, dismissed all the rest, only depriving them of their living and goods. Only Acepſimas the bishop they retained, with whom one Jacobus a minister, or priest of his church, was also joined; not of any compulsion, but only as himself so desired and obtained of those magicians that he might follow him, and be coupled in the same bonds to serve the aged bishop, and to relieve (so much as he might) his calamities, and heal his wounds. For he had been sore scourged before of the magicians, after

ter they had apprehended him, and brought him to worship the sun; which thing, because he would not do, they cast him into prison again, where this Jacobus was waiting upon him. At the same time likewise Athalas a priest or minister, also Azadanes and Abdiefus deacons, were imprisoned, and miserably scourged for the testimony of the Lord Jesus. After this the Archimagus, espying his time, complaineth unto the king of them, having authority and commission given him, (unless they would worship the sun), to punish them as he pleased. This commandment received of the king, the master Magus doth declare to them in prison. But they answered again plainly, That they would never be either betrayers of Christ, or worshippers of the sun. Whereupon, without mercy, they were put to bitter torments; where Acepſimas strongly persisting in the confession of Christ, endured to death. The other being no less rent and wounded with scourges, yet continued marvellously alive; and because they would in no case turn from their constant sentence, were turned again into prison. Of whom Athalas, in the time of his whipping, was so drawn and racked with pulling, that both his arms being loosed out of the joints, hanged down from his body; which he so carried about without use of any hand to feed himself, but as he was fed of others. *Sozom. lib. 2. cap. 13.*

Miserable, and almost innumerable, were the slaughters under the reign of this Sapoſes, of bishops, ministers, deacons, religious men, holy virgins, and other ecclesiastical persons, such as did then cleave to the doctrine of Christ, and suffered for the same. The names of the bishops, besides the other multitude taken in the persecution, are recited in Sozomenus, *lib. 2. cap. 13.* and in Nicephorus, *lib. 8. cap. 37.* in this order following: Barbasimes, Paulus, Gaddiabes, Sabinus, Mareas, Mocius, Johannes, Hormisdas, Papas, Jacobus, Romas, Maares, Agas, Bochres, Abdas, Abiefus, Joannes, Abramius, Agdelas, Sabores, Isaac, Dausas, Bior also, with Maureanda his fellow-bishop, and the rest of his churches under him, to the number of two hundred and fifty persons, which were the same time apprehended of the Persians, &c. Briefly, to comprehend the whole multitude of them that suffered in that persecution, the



the manner of their apprehension, the cruelty of their torments, how, and where they suffered, and in what places, it is not possible for any history to discharge. Neither are the Persians themselves (as Sozomenus recordeth) able to recite them. In sum, the multitude and number of them, whom they are able to recite by name, cometh to the sum of sixteen thousand men and women.

The rumour and noise of this so miserable affliction of the Christians in the kingdom of Persia, coming to the ears of Constantinus the emperor, put him in great heaviness, studying and revolving with himself, how to help the matter, which indeed was very hard for him to do. It so befel the same time, that certain ambassadors were then at Rome from Sapoors king of Persia; to whom Constantinus did easily grant and consent, satisfying all their requests and demands; thinking thereby to obtain the more friendship at the king's hands, that at his request he would be good to the Christians; to whom he writeth his epistle in their behalf, and sendeth the same by his messengers, beginning thus.

*Divinam fidem servans veritatis lucem fortior. Veritatis luce doctus divinam fidem cognosco. Per ea igitur, quibus illa res agendas confirmat, sanctissimam religionem cognitam reddo, & hunc me cultum doctorem cognitionis sancti Dei habere confiteor, &c. Euseb. de vita Constantini, lib. 4.* The contents whereof briefly do tend to this effect. Declaring unto him how he should stand much beholden to him, if at his request he would shew some quiet and rest to the Christians, in whose religion there was nothing which he could justly blame. For so much as in their sacrifices they use to kill nothing, nor to shed blood, but only to offer up unbloody sacrifices, to make their prayers unto God; who delighteth not in blood-shedding, but only in the soul that loveth virtue, and followeth such doctrine and knowledge which is agreeing unto true piety. And therefore such men as do lead him, and learn so to believe and to worship God, are more to be commended. Moreover, he assureth him to find God more merciful unto him, if he would embrace the godly piety and truth of the Christians. And for example thereof, bringeth in the stories of Galienus  
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and Valerianus, who so long as they were favourers of the Christians, did prosper and flourish; but as soon as they moved any persecution against them, it happened to them, as it did to all other emperors before them, that all went backward with them; as especially might appear by Valerianus, who after he had raged so cruelly against the Christians, was estoons overcome of the Persians; the revenging hand of God falling upon him, where he led ever a miserable life in wretched captivity. Further also, for the more evidence of the same, he inferreth the examples of those emperors and tyrants in his time, whom he vanquished and subdued only by his faith in Christ, for the which faith God was his helper, and gave him the victory in many battles, and triumph over great tyrants; whereby he hath so enlarged the dominion of the Roman monarchy, from the west ocean unto the uttermost parts well near of all the east. To the doing and working whereof, he neither called to him the help of any charmer, or divination of southsayer, nor used the killing of any sacrifice; but only the following of the cross, and prayer made to almighty God, without any other bloody sacrifice, was the armour wherewith he overcame, &c. And in the end of the epistle addeth these words. What joy (saith he) what gladness would it be to my heart, to hear the state also of the Persians to flourish, as I wish it to do, by embracing this sort of men, the Christians I mean? So that both you with them, and they with you, in long prosperity may enjoy much felicity together as your hearts would desire, and in so doing no doubt ye shall: for so shall you have God, which is the Author and Creator of all this universal world, to be merciful and gracious to you. These men therefore I commend unto you upon your kingly honour; and upon your clemency and piety, wherewith you are endued, I commit them unto you, desiring you to embrace and receive them according to your humanity and benignity, agreeing and convenient to your estate; who in so doing shall now both procure to yourself grace through your faith, and also shall declare to me a great pleasure and benefit worthy of thanks.

This example wrote Constantinus to king Saporess; such  
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care had this godly prince for them that believed in Christ, not only in his own monarchy, but also in all places of the world; neither is it to be doubted, but this intercession of the emperor, did something mitigate the heat of the Persians persecution, although thereof we read no certain thing in our histories.

Of other troubles and persecutions we read, which happened afterwar'd in the said country of Persia, under Isdigerdes the king; but these followed long after, about the time of the emperor Theodosius. At which time suffered Andas their-bishop, and Hormisda, a great nobleman's son, and of great reputation among the Persians; whom when the king understood to be a Christian, and to deny to turn from his religion, condemned him to keep his eliphants naked. In process of time, the king looking out, and seeing him all swarted and tanned in the sun, commanded him to have a shirt put on, and to be brought before him; whom then the king asked, if he would deny Christ? Hormisda hearing this, tore off his shirt from his body, and cast it from him, saying, If ye think that I will deny my faith to Christ for a shirt, have here your gift again, &c. And so was upon that expelled the country. *Theodor. lib. 5. cap. 39.*

Another there was that same time, named Suenes, which had under him an hundred servants. The king taking displeasure with him for that he would not alter from his religion and godly truth, asked who was the worst of all his servants; and him the king made ruler of all the rest, and coupling him with his master's wife, brought also Suenes under his subjection, thinking thereby to subdue also the faith of Suenes: but it was builded upon a sure foundation.

Of Benjamin the deacon, thus writeth the said Theodoretus, in his first book, that after two years of his imprisonment, at the request of the Roman legate he was delivered; who afterwar'd, contrary to the king's commandment, preached and taught the gospel of Christ, and was most miserably excarnificate, having twenty sharp pricks of reeds thrust under his nails; but when he did laugh at that, then in his privy yard he had a sharp reed thrust in with horrible pain. After that a certain long stalk ragged and thorny,



being thrust into his body by the nether part, was forced into him; with the horribleness of the pain whereof, the valiant and invincible foldier of the Lord gave over his life. *Theod. ibid.* And thus much concerning the martyrs and persecutions among the Persians, although these persecutions belong not to this time, which came (as it is said) long after the days of Constantinus, about the year of our Lord four hundred twenty and five.

Likewise under Julian the wicked apostate, certain there were which constantly suffered martyrdom by the Heathen idolaters; as Emilianus, who was burned in Thracia, and Domitius, which was slain in his cave. Theodorus also, for singing of a psalm at the removing of the body of Babilas, (whereof mention is made before), being apprehended, was so examined with exquisite torments, and so cruelly excruciate from morning almost to noon, that hardly he escaped with life. Who being asked afterward of his friends, how he could abide so sharp torments? said, That at the first beginning he felt some pain, but afterward there stood by him a young man, who as he was sweating, wiped away his sweat, and refreshed him with cold water oftentimes; wherewith he was so delighted, that when he was let down from the engine, it grieved him more than before. *Ruff. lib. 5. cap. 26. Theod. lib. 3. cap. 11. Sozom. lib. 5. cap. 10.*

Artemius also, the captain of the Egyptian soldiers, the same time lost his head for his religion indeed; although other causes were pretended against him. *Theodor. Niceph. lib. 10. cap. 11.*

Add unto these, moreover, Eusebius and Nestabus, two brethren, with Nestor also, who for their Christianity were dragged through the streets and murdered of the idolatrous people of Gaza. *Sozom. lib. eod. cap. 11.*

But especially the cruelty of the Arethusians, a people of Syria, exceeded against the Christian virgins, whom they set out naked before the multitude to be scorned; after that being shaven, they covered them with swill and drass, wont to be given to their hogs, and so caused their bowels and flesh to be devoured of the hungry swine. This rage and fury of the wicked Arethusians, Sozomenus supposeth

to come of this, because that Constantinus before had broken them from their country-manner of setting forth and exposing their virgins filthily to whomsoever lusted; and destroyed the temple of Venus in Heliopolis, restraining the people there from their filthiness and vile whoredom. *Sozom. lib. 5. cap. 10.*

Of the lamentable story, or rather tragedy of Marcus Arethusius their bishop, thus writeth the said Sozomenus, and also Theodoretus in his third book, in these words as follow.

This tragedy (saith he) of Marcus Arethusius, doth require the eloquence and worthiness of Eschilus and Sophocles, which may, as the matter deserveth, set forth and beautify his great afflictions. This man, at the commandment of Constantinus, pulled down a certain temple dedicated to idols, and instead thereof built up a church where the Christians might congregate. The Arethusians remembering the little good-will that Julianus bare unto him, accused him as a traitor and enemy to him. At the first, according as the scripture teacheth, he prepared himself to fly; but when he perceived that there were certain of his kinsmen or friends apprehended in his stead, returning again of his own accord, he offered himself to those that thirsted for his blood. Whom when they had gotten, as men neither pitying his old age and worn years, nor abashed at his virtuous conversation, being a man so adorned both with doctrine and manners, first stript him naked, and pitifully beat him; then within a while after, they cast him into a foul filthy sink, and from thence being brought, they caused boys to thrust him in with sharpened sticks made for the nonce to provoke his pain the more. Lastly, they put him in a basket, and being anointed with honey and broth, they hung him abroad in the heat of the sun, as meat for wasps and flies to feed upon. And all this extremity they shewed unto him, for that they would inforce him to do one of these things; that is, either to build up again the temple which he had destroyed, or else to give so much money as should pay for the building of the same. But even as he purposed with himself to suffer and abide their grievous torments, so refused he to do that they demanded

manded of him. At length they taking him to be but a poor man, and not able to pay such a sum of money, promised to forgive him the one half, so that he would be contented to pay the other half. But he hanging in the basket, wounded pitifully with the sharpened sticks of boys and children, and all to be bitten with wasps and flies, did not only conceal his pain and grief, but also derided those wicked ones, and called them base, low, and terrene people, and he himself to be exalted and set on high. At length they demanding of him but a small sum of money, he answered thus ; It is as great wickedness to confer one halfpenny in case of impiety, as if a man should bestow the whole. Thus they being not able to prevail against him, let him down, and leaving him, went their way, so that every man might learn at his mouth the example of true piety and faithfulness.

Although the tractation of these aforesaid stories and persecutions of Persia, above premised, do stray somewhat out of the order and course of time and place, as which came neither in the time of Constantine, nor be pertinent to the monarchy of Rome ; yet because in this present history we are in hand with the holy martyrs and saints of Christ, for so much as these also gave such a faithful testimony of the Lord Jesus with their blood, I thought therefore not to pass them over without some testimony in this our catalogue of holy martyrs. And here an end of these persecutions of the primitive church.

It may peradventure be marvelled of some, reading the history of these so terrible persecutions above specified, why God, the almighty director of all things, would suffer his own people and faithful servants, believing in his own and only begotten Son Jesus, so cruelly to be handled, so wrongfully to be vexed, so extremely to be tormented and put to death, and that the space of so many years together, as in these foresaid persecutions may appear. To the which admiration I have nothing to answer, but to say with the words of Hierome, *Non debemus super hac rerum iniquitate perturbari, videntes, &c.* We ought not to be moved with this iniquity of things, to see the wicked to prevail against the body ; for so much as in the beginning  
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of the world we see Abel the just to be killed of wicked Cain, and afterward; Jacob being thrust out, Esau to reign in his father's house; in like case the Egyptians with brick and tile afflicted the sons of Israel; yea, and the Lord himself, was he not crucified of the Jews, Barabbas the thief being let go? Time would not suffice me to recite and reckon up how the godly in this world go to wreck, the wicked flourishing and prevailing. *Hieron. in Aba. cap. 1.* Briefly, howsoever the cause hereof proceedeth, whether for our sins here in this life, or how else soever; yet this is to us, and may be to all men a sufficient stay, that we are sure these afflictions and persecutions of God his people in this world, not to come by any chance or blind fortune, but by the provident appointment and forewarning of God. For so in the old law, by the affliction of the children of Israel, he hath prefigured these persecutions of his Christians. So by the words of Christ's own mouth in the gospel he did forewarn his church of these troubles to come. Again, neither did he suffer these so great afflictions to fall upon his servants, before that he had premonished them sufficiently by special revelation in the Apocalyps of John his servant; in the which Apocalyps he declared unto his church before, not only what troubles were coming at hand towards them, where, and by whom they should come; but also in plain number, if the words of the prophecy be well understood, assigneth the true time, how long the said persecutions should continue, and when they should cease. For as there is no doubt, but by the beast with seven heads bearing the whore of Babylon, drunken with the blood of saints, is signified the city of Rome; so in my judgment the power of making of forty-two months (in the 13th of the Apocalyps) is to be expounded, taking every month for a Sabbath of years, that is, reckoning a month for seven years, so that forty and two such Sabbaths of years being gathered together, make up the years just, between the time of Christ's death to the last year of the persecution of Maxentius, when Constantinus fighting under the banner of Christ, overcame him, and made an end of all persecution within the monarchy of Rome. The number of which years, by plain computation, come to two hundred

dred ninety and four; to the which two hundred ninety and four years, if ye add the other six years, under the persecution of Licinius in Asia, then it filleth up full the three hundred years. And so long continued the persecution of Christ's people under the Heathen tyrants and emperors of the monarchy of Rome, according to the number of the forty-two months which the beast had power to make, specified in the 13th of the Apocalyps. For the better explication whereof, because the matter being of no small importance, greatly appertaineth to the public utility of the church; and lest any should misdoubt me herein, to follow any private interpretation of mine own; I thought good to communicate to the reader, that which hath been imparted unto me, in the opening of these mystical numbers in the foresaid book of Revelation contained, by occasion as followeth.

As I was in hand with these histories, and therein considered the exceeding rage of these persecutions, the intolerable torments of the blessed saints, so cruelly racked, rent, torn, and pluckt in pieces with all kind of tortures, pains, and punishments that could be devised, more bitter than any death itself; I could not, without great sorrow and passion of mind, behold their sorrowful afflictions, or write of their bloody passions. Wherein much like it happened to me as did to Titus Livius; who writing of the wars of Carthage, was so moved in the writing thereof, *Ac si in parte aliqua laboris ac periculi ipse pariter fuisset*. Further, I proceed in the story, and the hotter the persecutions grew, the more my grief with them and for them increased; not only pitying their woful case, but also almost reasoning with God; thus thinking like a fool with myself, why God of his goodness would suffer his children and servants so vehemently to be cruciated and afflicted? If mortal things were governed by heavenly providence, (as must needs be granted), why did the wicked so rage and flourish, and the godly go so to wrack? If sins deserved punishment, yet neither were they sinners alone, and why was their death above all other so sharp and bitter? At least why would the Lord suffer the vehemency of these so horrible persecutions to endure so long time against his poor church, shewing

shewing unto them no certain determined end of their tribulations, whereby they knowing the appointed determination of almighty God, with more consolation might endure out the same? As the Israelites in the captivity of Babylon had seventy years limited unto them; and under Pharaoh they were promised a deliverance out. Also under the Syrian tyrants threescore and two weeks were abridged unto them. Only in these persecutions I could find no end determined, nor limitation set for their deliverance. Whereupon much marvelling with myself, I searched the book of Revelation, to see whether any thing there might be found; where although I well perceived the beast there described to signify the empire of Rome, which had power to overcome the saints; yet concerning the time and continuance of these persecutions under the beast, I found nothing to satisfy my doubt. For albeit I read there of forty-two months, of a time, times, and half a time, of one thousand two hundred and threescore days; yet all this by computation coming but to three years and a half, came nothing near the long continuance of these persecutions, which lasted three hundred years. Thus being vexed and turmoiled in spirit, about the reckoning of these numbers and years; it so happened upon a Sunday in the morning I lying in my bed, and musing about these numbers, suddenly it was answered to my mind, as with a majesty, thus inwardly saying within me; Thou fool, count these months by Sabbaths, as the weeks of Daniel are counted by Sabbaths. The Lord I take to witness, thus it was. Whereupon thus being admonished, I began to reckon the forty-two months by Sabbaths; first of months, that would not serve; then by Sabbaths of years, wherein I began to feel some probable understanding. Yet not satisfied herewith, to have the matter more sure, eftsoons I repaired to certain merchants of mine acquaintance; of whom one is departed, a true faithful servant of the Lord, the other two be yet alive, and witnesses hereof. To whom the number of these foresaid forty-two months being propounded and examined by Sabbaths of years, the whole sum was found to surmount unto two hundred ninety and four years, containing the



the full and just time of these foresaid persecutions, neither more nor less.

Now this one clasp being opened, the other numbers that follow are plain and manifest to the intelligent reader to be understood. For where mention is made of three years and a half, of one time, two times, and half a time, also of one thousand two hundred and threescore days, all these come to one reckoning and signify forty and two months, by which months, as is said, is signified the whole time of these primitive persecutions, as here in order may appear.

*The mystical numbers in the Apocalyps opened.*

**F***irst*, Where mention is made Apocalyps chap. xi. that the two prophets shall prophesy 1260 days; and also that the woman flying into the desert, shall there be fed 1260 days; who knoweth not that 1260 days make three years and a half? that is, months - - - 42

*Secondly*, Where we read, chap. xi. the bodies of the two foresaid prophets shall lie in the streets of the great city unburied the space of three days and a half, and after the said three days and a half they shall revive again, &c. let the hours of these three days and a half (which be 42) be reckoned every day for a Sabbath of years, or else every day for a month, and they come to months - 42

*Thirdly*, Whereas in the same book is expressed, that the woman had two wings given her to flee unto the desert for a time, times, and half a time; give for one time one year, or one day; for two times, two years, or two days; for half a time, half a year, or half a day; and so it is manifest, that these three years and a half, mount to months - - - 42

*Fourthly*, Account these forty-two months afore said (which the beast had power to make, Apoc. xi.) by Sabbath of years, that is, seven years for a month, or every month for seven years, and it amounteth to the sum of years - - - 294

And so have ye the just years, days, times, and months of

of these foresaid persecutions under the beast, neither shorter nor longer, reckoning from the death of John Baptist under Herod the Roman king, to the end of Maxentius, and of Licinius, the two last great persecutors, the one in the west, the other in the east; who were both vanquished by godly Constantinus. And so peace was given to the church, albeit not in such ample wise, but that divers tumults and troubles afterward ensued, yet they lasted not long: and the chief brunt, to speak of these Roman persecutions, which the Holy Ghost especially considered above all other in this his Revelation, thus ended in the time of Constantinus. Then was the great dragon the devil, to wit, the fierce rage and power of his malicious persecuting, tied short for a thousand years after this, so that he could not prevail in any such sort, but that the power and glory of the gospel by little and little increasing and spreading with great joy and liberty, so prevailed, that at length it got the upper hand, and replenished the whole earth; rightly verifying therein the water of Ezekiel, which issuing out of the right side of the altar, the further it ran, the deeper it grew, till at length it replenished the whole ocean-sea, and healed all the fishes therein. No otherwise the course of the gospel proceeding of small and hard beginnings, kept still his stream; the more it was stopped, the swifter it ran; by blood it feeded, by death it quickened; by cutting it multiplied, through violence it sprung; till at last out of thralldom and oppression so brast forth into perfect liberty, and flourished in all prosperity; had it so been, that the Christians wisely and moderately could have used this liberty, and not abused the same, forgetting their former estate to their own pride, pomp, and worldly ease, as it came afterward to pass.

And thus much touching the propheticall numbers in the Apocalyps. Wherein is to be noted and magnified the eternal wisdom and high providence of Almighty God, so disposing and governing his church, that no adversity or perturbation happeneth at any time to it, which his provident wisdom doth not foresee before, and preordain; neither doth he preordain or determine any thing, which he doth not most truly perform, both foreseeing the begin-

ning of such persecutions, and limiting the end thereof, how long to continue, and when to cease. In much like sort we read in the book of Genesis, how the stock of Israel was four hundred years in the land of Egypt. During the space of which four hundred years, after the death of Joseph, (who beareth a plain figure of Christ), they were hardly intreated, and cruelly afflicted of the Egyptians, about the space of three hundred years, reckoning from after the death of Joseph, to their deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt; semblably as these Christians, after Christ's time, suffered the like bondage under the Roman tyrants.

Thus much by the way I thought to insinuate, lest any should muse or take any offence in himself, to see or read of the church so long and so many years to be under so miserable and extreme afflictions: wherein neither chance nor fortune, nor disposition of man, hath had any place, but only the forecounsel and determination of the Lord so governed and disposed the same; who not only did suffer them to fall, and foresaw those persecutions before they fell, but also appointed the times and years how long they should last, and when they should have an end, as by the foresaid forty-two months in the 13th and 11th chapters of St John's Apocalyps hath been declared. Which months, containing two hundred ninety and four years, if they be rightly gathered, make the full time between the first year of the persecution of Christ under the Jews and Herod, till the last year of persecution under Licinius; which was from the nativity of Christ, in the year of our Lord three hundred twenty and four; from the first persecution of Christ, in the year of our Lord two hundred ninety and four, as is afore said. After the which year, according to the preordinate counsel of God, when his severity had been sufficiently declared upon his own house, it pleased him to shew mercy again, and to bind up Satan the old serpent, according to the 20th chapter of the Revelation, for the space of a thousand years, that is, from this time of Licinius, to the time of John Wickliff and John Hufs. During all which time, albeit certain conflicts and tumults have been among Christian bishops themselves in the church; yet no universal murdering



murdering persecution was stirring before the preaching of John Wickliff, of Hufs, and such others.

Thus having at large discoursed these horrible persecutions past, and heavy afflictions of Christian martyrs; now by the grace of God, coming out of this Red sea of bloody persecution, leaving Pharaoh and his host behind, let us sing gloriously to the worthy name of our God, who through the blood of the Lamb, after long and tedious afflictions, at length hath visited his people with comfort, hath tied up Satan short, hath sent his meek Moses, (gentle Constantine I mean), by whom it hath so pleased the Lord to work deliverance to his captive people, to set his servants at liberty, to turn their mourning into joy, to magnify the church of his Son, to destroy the idols of all the world, to grant life and liberty (and would God also not so much riches) unto them which before were the abjects of all the world; and all by the means of godly Constantinus, the meek and most Christian emperor, of whose divine victories, against so many tyrants and emperors, persecutors of Christ's people, and lastly against Licinius, in the year of our Lord three hundred twenty and four, of whose other noble acts and prowesses, of whose blessed virtues, and his happy birth and progeny, part we have comprehended before, part now remaineth (Christ willing) to be declared.

This Constantine was the son of Constantius the emperor, a good and virtuous child of a good and virtuous father; born in Britain, (as saith Eutropius), whose mother was named Helena, daughter indeed of king Coilus; although Ambrosius, in his funeral oration of the death of Theodosius, saith, she was an inholder's daughter. He was a most bountiful and gracious prince, having a desire to nourish learning and good arts, and did oftentimes use to read, write, and study himself. He had marvellous good success and prosperous atchieving of all things he took in hand, which then was (and truly) supposed to proceed of this, for that he was so great a favourer of the Christian faith. Which faith when he had once embraced, he did ever after most devoutly and religiously reverence, and commanded by especial commission, and proclamation, that every man should profess the same religion throughout all

the Roman monarchy. The worshipping of idols, (whereunto he was addict by the allurements of Fausta his wife, in so much that he did sacrifice to them), after the discomfiture of Maxentius in battle, he utterly abjured; but his baptism he deferred even unto his old age, because he had determined a journey into Persia, and thought in Jordan to have been baptized. *Euseb. lib. 4. de vita Constantini.*

As touching his natural disposition and wit, he was very eloquent, a good philosopher, and in disputation sharp and ingenious. He was accustomed to say, that an emperor ought to refuse no labour for the utility of the commonwealth; yea, and to adventure the mangling of his body for the remedy thereof; but if otherwise it may be holpen, to cherish the same. This do Aurelius, Victor, Pomponius Letus, and Ignatius write of him. And Ælius Lampridius saith, writing upon the life of Heliogabalus, that Constantinus was wont to say, that an empire was given by the determinate purpose of God, that he to whom it was given, should so employ his diligence, as he might be thought worthy of the same at the hands of the giver; which same saying also Augustine noteth in his third book against Cresconius, *epist. 49. 50.*

He first entered into the empire by the mercifulness of God, minding after long waves of doleful persecution to restore unto his church peace and tranquillity, in the year of our Lord three hundred and eleven, as Eusebius accounteth in his chronicle. His reign continued, as Eutropius affirmeth, thirty years, Letus saith thirty and two years lacking two months. Great peace and tranquillity enjoyed the church under the reign of this good emperor, which took great pain and travel for the preservation thereof. First, yea, and that before he had subdued Licinius, he set forth many edicts for the restitution of the goods of the church, for the revoking of the Christians out of exile, for taking away the dissention of the doctors out of the church, for the setting of them free from public charges, and such like, even as the copy of his constitutions hereunder declareth, which Eusebius, *lib. 10. cap. 5.* repeateth in this wise.

The copy of an epistle of Constantinus, sent to his subjects inhabiting in the east.

**V**ICTOR Constantinus Maximus Augustus, to our loving subjects inhabiting throughout the east parts, sendeth greeting. The thing itself, which in the sure and most firm law of nature is contained, doth give unto all men, (even as God hath ordained the same), sufficient perceivance and understanding, both of such things as man ought to foresee, as also what things presently he ought to meditate. Neither is there any thing therein to be doubted of such as have their minds directed to the scope or mark of perfect understanding; so that the perfect comprehending of sound reason, and the perceivance thereof be compared with the knowledge of God, being the true and perfect virtue. Wherefore let no wise man be troubled, although he sees divers men of divers dispositions; for wisdom which springeth of virtue, cannot abide or acquaint herself with fond idiots, unless that (on the other side) the malice of perverse filthiness prolong her days, and cause the same idiocy to survive. Wherefore assuredly the crown and price of virtue lieth open unto all men, and the most mighty God ordereth the judgment of the same. I undoubtedly (as manifestly as possible is) will endeavour myself to testify and confess unto you all the hope which is in me. I think verily that the emperors which before this time have lately been, even for their tyranny had the empire taken from them; and my father only exercising and using all meekness and lenity in his affairs, calling upon God the Father with great devotion and humility, hath been exalted to the same; and all the rest, as men wanting their wits, and in comparison as savage beasts, rather did give themselves to like cruelty, than to any lenity and gentleness towards their subjects; in which tyranny every one for his time being nuzzled, utterly subverted the true and infallible doctrine; and so great malice was there kindled in their breasts, that when all things were in peaceable tranquillity, they made and raised most cruel and bloody intestine or civil wars.

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It is credibly informed us, that in those days Apollo gave answers, but not by any man's mouth, but out of a certain cave and dark place, saying, That he was much disquieted by those that were the just men and livers upon the earth, so that he could or would not for them declare the truth of such things as others demanded. And hereby it came to pass, that such false divinations were given from the golden tables in Apollo's temple. And this thing did his propheticall priest complain of, when he took up again the hair of his head, that other had contemptuously cast down; and said, that the neglecting of his divination was the cause of so many evils amongst men. But let us see what was the end hereof. We now boldly, and without all fear, invoke and worship the omnipotent God. When I was a child, I heard, that he which then was chief emperor of Rome, unhappy, yea, most unhappy man, being seduced and brought into error by his soldiers, curiously inquired who were those just men upon the earth that Apollo meant? And one of his priests which was near about him, made answer, that they were the Christians. This answer unto him being as delectable as honey unto the mouth, drew the sword, (given unto him to be a revenger of evil-doers and malefactors), against the professors of the irreprehensible sanctimony and religion; and straightway he gave forth a commission (to bloody homicides, as I may well call them), and gave commandment to all the judges, that they should endeavour themselves with all the cunning they had, to the devising of more grievous and sharper punishments against the poor Christians; then, then, I say, a man might have seen how greatly the honest professors of that religion were molested with cruelty, and daily suffered no small injuries and contumelies; and that also they suffered and sustained the same with such temperance, as though they had had no injuries at all done unto them. Which temperance and patience of theirs was the cause why the furious citizens were the more mad and raging against them. What fires, what tortures, what kind of torments were there, but they, without respect either of age or sex, were enforced to feel them?

Then did the earth, without doubt, herself bewail her children,

children, and the round world, which containeth all things, being sprinkled and imbrued with their blood, made doleful lamentation for them, and the day itself provoked to mourn, was made amazed for them. But what is this to purpose? Now the very barbarous nations rejoice for their sakes which received and harboured them, when they were afraid and fled from us, keeping them, as it were, in most loving and amiable captivity; and they saved not only their lives, but also were a defence for their religion. And now also the Roman nation remembereth and hath before their eyes this blame and spot, which the Christians that were of that time worthily gave unto them, when they by them were banished (as unfit members of their commonwealth) amongst the barbarous people. What needeth to make further rehearsal of the mourning lamentation, which the Heathen people themselves throughout all the world made for the pitiful murder and slaughter of them? After this it came to pass, that they which were authors of all these mischiefs died also, and were committed for their reward to the most filthy and horrible dungeon of hell. They being so intangled with intestine and civil wars, left alive neither name nor kinsmen of their own; which thing undoubtedly had not chanced, unless the wicked divinations of Apollo's oracles had deceived and bewitched them. To thee therefore now I pray, Oh most mighty God, that thou wilt vouchsafe to be merciful, and pardon all the east parts, and inhabitants of the same, being oppressed with calamity; and that by me thy servant thou wilt of thy goodness help and relieve the same. And these things rashly crave I not at thy hands, O Lord, most mighty and holiest God of all. For I being persuaded by the only oracles, have both begun and also finished wholesome and profitable things; and further, by the bearing and shewing of thine ensign, have overcome a mighty and strong host; and when any necessity of the commonwealth (to my charge committed) requireth thereunto, (following those signs and tokens of thy virtues), I boldly go forth and fight against mine enemies; and for this cause have I sacrificed my soul unto thee, purified and cleansed both with thy love and fear. Yea truly, thy name do I sincerely love, and thy power do

I reverence, which by many tokens and wonders hast shewed and confirmed thereby my belief and faith. Therefore will I do my endeavour, and bend myself thereunto, that I may re-edify thy most holy house; which those wicked and ungodly emperors have with so great ruin laid waste; thy people do I desire to bring and stablish in firm peace and tranquillity, and that for the public utility of all the inhabitants of the earth. Those which yet err, and are out of the way, enjoy the benefit of peace and quietness, with and amongst the number of the faithful sort; for I trust the restitution of the like society and participation, may be a means to bring them also that err into the perfect way of verity. Let no man therefore be grievous one unto another, but what every man thinkest best, that let him do; for such as are wise, ought thoroughly to be persuaded, that they only mean to live holily, and as they should do, whom the Spirit of God moveth to take their delight and recreation in reading his holy will; and if others wilfully will go out of the way, cleaving to the synagogues of false doctrine, they may at their own peril. As for us, we have the most worthy house or congregation of God's verity, which he, according to his own goodness and nature, hath given us. And this also we wish unto them, that with like participation and common consent, they may feel with us the same delectation of mind. For this our religion is neither new, nor newly invented, but it is as old as we believe the creation of the world to be, and which God hath commanded to be celebrated with such worship as both seemed and pleased him; but all living men are liars, and are deceived with divers and sundry illusions. Thou, O God, for Christ thy Son's sake, suffer not this wickedness again to root; thou hast set up a clear burning light, that thereby as many as thou hast chosen may come unto thee, these thy miracles approve the same. It is thy power that keepeth us in innocency and fidelity. The sun and the moon run their appointed course. Neither yet in ranging-wise wander the stars to what place of the world they list themselves. The days, years, months, and times keep their appointed turns. The earth abideth firm and unmoveable at thy word; and the wind at the time (by thee directed)



directed) stormeth and bloweth. The streaming watery floods ebb in time according as they flow. The raging sea abideth within her bounded limits; and for that the ocean sea stretcheth out herself in equal length and breadth with the whole earth, this must needs be wrought with some marvellous workmanship of thine own hand. Which thing, unless it were at thy will made and disposed, without all doubt so great difference and partition between, would ere this time have brought utter ruin and destruction both to the life of man, and to all that belongeth to man beside. Which for that they have such great and huge conflicts amongst themselves, as also the invisible spirits have; we give thee thanks, O Lord most mighty, God of all gods, that all mankind hath not been destroyed thereby. Surely even as greatly as thy benignity and gentleness is manifested by divers and sundry benefits bestowed upon us, so much also is the same set forth and declared in the discipline of thy eternal word, to those that be heavenly wise, and apply themselves to the attainment of sincere and true virtue. But if any such there be that little regard, or have but small respect unto the consideration thereof, let them not blame or lay a fault in others that do the same; for that physic whereby health is obtained, is manifestly offered unto all men. Now therefore let no man go about to subvert that, which experience itself doth shew (of necessity) to be pure and good. Let us therefore altogether use the participation of this benefit bestowed upon us, that is to say, the benefit of peace and tranquillity, setting apart all controversy. And let no man hurt or be prejudicial to his fellow for that thing wherein he thinketh himself to have done well. If by that, which any man knoweth and hath experience of, he thinketh he may profit his neighbour, let him do the same; if not, let him give over and remit it till another time; for there is a great diversity betwixt the willing and voluntary embracing of religion, and that when a man is thereunto enforced and coerced. Of these things have I made a more large discourse, than indeed the scope of mediocrity requireth; especially because I would not have my faith (touching the verity) to be hid; for that I hear there be some which complain that the old accustomed haunting of  
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their

their temples, and that the power of such darkness is cut off and taken away. Which thing surely I would take in better part, were it not that the violent rebellion of flagitious error were so fixed in many mens hearts, whereby they thirst after the utter subversion of the commonwealth and empire. *Euseb. lib. 10. cap. 5.*

Such was the goodness of this emperor Constantinus, or rather such was the providence of almighty God toward his church in stirring him up, that all his care and study of mind was set upon nothing else, but only how to benefit and enlarge the commodities of the same. Neither was it to him enough to deliver the church and people of God from outward vexation of foreign tyrants and persecutors. No less beneficial was his godly care also in quieting the inward dissensions and disturbance within the church, among the Christian bishops themselves; according as we read of Moses the deliverer of the Israelites, in agreeing the brethren together when he saw them at variance, *Exod. ii.* No less also did his vigilant study extend in erecting, restoring, and enriching the churches of God in all cities, and in providing for the ministers of the same. And therefore writing to Anilinus his chief captain, declareth his will and mind to him, in letters concerning the goods which did appertain to the churches of the Christians, that he should procure vigilantly for the same; that all such goods, houses, and gardens, belonging before to the right of churches, should again be restored in all speedy wise, and that he therein might be certified with speed, &c.

Moreover, he writing to the said Anilinus in another letter, signifieth unto him in this effect; That for so much as the contempt of God his reverend religion, is and hath been ever the greatest decay to the name and people of Rome, as contrarily the maintaining and reverencing the same hath ever brought prosperity to all commonwealths; therefore he, in consideration thereof, hath taken that order, and giveth to him in charge, that through that province where he hath to do, which was in Africa where Cecilianus was bishop, he should there see and provide, that all such ministers and clerks, whose vocation was to serve

serve in the church, should be freed and exempted from all public duties and burdens, whereby they being so privileged, and all impediments removed which should hinder their divine ministration, thereby the common utility of the people might the better flourish, &c.

Furthermore, the said Constantinus in another letter, writing to Miltiades bishop of Rome, and to Marcus, declareth in his letters to them how Cecilianus bishop of Carthage hath been accused unto him by divers of his colleagues and fellow-bishops. Wherefore his will is, that the said Cecilianus, with ten bishops his accusers, with ten other his defendants, should repair up to him at Rome, where, in the present assistance of the foresaid Miltiades, Rheticus, Maternus, Marinus, and of other their fellow-colleagues, the cause of Cecilianus might be heard and rightly examined, so that all schism and division might be cut off from among them; wherein the fervent desire of Constantinus to peace and unity may well appear.

Upon the like cause and argument also, he writeth to Chrestus bishop of Syracusa; being so desirous to nourish peace and concord in the church, that he offereth to him, with his under-ministers and three servants, his free carriage to come up to him unto the counsel of other bishops, for the agreeing of certain matters belonging to the church.

He writeth also another letter to the forenamed Cecilianus bishop of Carthage.

To the provinces likewise of Palestina, and those parts about, he directeth his edict in the behalf of the Christians, for the releasing of such as were in captivity, and for the restoring again of them which had sustained any loss in the former persecution before, and for the refreshing of such as heretofore had been oppressed with any ignominy or molestation for their confession sake; declaring in the said edict, how that this whole body, life and soul, and whatsoever is in him, he oweth to God, and to the service of him, &c.

Moreover, another letter he writeth to Eusebius, for the edifying of new Christian churches, and restoring of them which had been wasted before by foreign enemies. And after he had collected the synod of Nice for the study of



peace and unity of the church, he writeth upon the same to Alexander and Arrius. In which his letters he most lamentably uttered the great grief of his heart, to see and hear of their contention and division, whereby the peace and common harmony of the church was broken, the synod provoked and resisted, the holy people of the Lord divided into parts and tumults, contrary to the office of good and circumspect men, whose duty were rather to nourish concord, and to seek tranquillity. And though in some small points and light trifles they did disagree from others; yet the example of philosophers might teach them, who although in some part of a sentence or piece of a question some might dissent from others, yet in the unity of their profession, they did all join as fellows together. In like case were it their duty in such fruitless questions, (or rather pieces of questions), to keep them in the conceptions of their minds in silence unto themselves, and not to bring them forth into public synods; to break therefore from the communion of the reverend council; declaring, moreover, in the said epistle, the first origin and occasion of this their contentious dissention to rise upon vain and trifling terms, vile causes, and light questions, and pieces rather of questions; about such matters as neither are to be moved, nor to be answered unto being moved; more curious to be searched, and perilous to be expressed, than necessary to be inquired, *Magisque puerilibus ineptiis, quam sacerdotum ac cordatorum virorum prudentia convenientia*; as he there doth term them. Wherefore by all manner of means he doth labour them, doth intreat them, and persuade them, not only with reasons, but also with tears and sighing sobbs, that they would restore peace again unto the church, and quietness to the rest of his life, (which otherwise would not be sweet unto him), and they would return again to the communion of the reverend council; who in so doing should open his way and purposed journey into the east parts; which otherwise hearing of their discord and dissention, would be sorry to see with his eyes that which grieveth him now to hear with his ears; with much more in the same epistle contained, but this is the effect of the whole. *Euseb. de vita Constant. lib. 2.* Thus much I thought

thought summarily to comprehend, whereby the divine disposition and singular gentle nature of this meek and religious Constantine might more notoriously appear to all princes, for them to learn by his example what zeal and care they ought to bear toward the church of Christ, and how gently to govern, and how to be beneficial to the same.

Many other edicts and epistles written to other places and parties, be expressed at large in the second book of Eusebius, *De vita Constantini*; wherein the zealous care and princely beneficence of this noble emperor toward the church of Christ may appear; whereof in a brief recapitulation such specialties we have collected as here followeth, and is to be seen in Sozomenus, *lib. 1. cap. 8. 9.*

First, he commanded all them to be set free, whosoever for the confession of Christ had been condemned to banishment, or to the mines of metal, or to any public or private labour to them inflicted. Such as were put to any infamy or shame among the multitude, he willed them to be discharged from all such blemish of ignominy. Soldiers, which before were deprived either of their place, or put out of their wages, were put to their liberty either to serve again in their place, or quietly to live at home. Whatsoever honour, place, or dignity had been taken away from any man, should be restored to them again. The goods and possessions of them that had suffered death for Christ, howsoever they were alienated, should return to their heirs or next of kin, or for lack of them should be given to the church. He commanded moreover that only Christians should bear office; the other he charged and restrained, that neither they should sacrifice nor exercise any more divinations and ceremonies of the Gentiles, nor set up any images, nor keep any feasts of the Heathen idolaters. He corrected moreover and abolished all such unlawful manners and dishonest usages in the cities, as might be hurtful any wise to the church; as the custom that the Egyptians had in the flowing of Nilus, at what time the people used to run together like brute beasts, both men and women, and with all kind of filthiness and Sodomitry to pollute their cities in celebrating the increase of that river. This abomination Constantine extinguished, causing that wicked order, called  
Androgyne,

Androgyne, to be killed ; by reason whereof the river afterward (through the benefit of God) yielded more increase in his flowing, to the greater fertility of the ground, than it did before.

Among the Romans was an old law, That such as were barren, having no fruit of children, should be amerced of half their goods. Also, That such as being above the years of twenty and five unmarried, should not be numbered in the same privileges with them that were married, neither should be heirs to them, to whom notwithstanding they were next in kin. These laws, because they seemed unreasonable, (to punish the defect of nature, or gift of virginity, by man's law), he abrogated and took away. Another order was among the Romans, that they which made their wills being sick, had certain prescribed and conceived words appointed to them to use, which unless they followed, their wills stood in no effect. This law also Constantine repealed, permitting to every man in making his testament to use what words or what witnesses he would. Likewise among the Romans he restrained and took away the cruel and bloody spectacles and fights, where men were wont with swords one to kill another. Of the barbarous and filthy fashion of the Arethusians in Phenicia, I have mentioned before, where they used to expose and set forth their virgins to open fornication before they should be married ; which custom also Constantine removed away. Where no churches were, there he commanded new to be made ; where any were decayed, he commanded them to be repaired ; where any were too little, he caused them to be enlarged, giving to the same great gifts and revenues, not only of such tributes and taxes coming to him from certain sundry cities, which he transferred unto the churches, but also out of his own treasures. When any bishops required any council to be had, he satisfied their petitions ; and what in their councils and synods they established, being godly and honest, he was ready to confirm the same.

The armour of his soldiers, which were newly come from Gentility, he garnished with the arms of the cross, whereby they might learn the sooner to forget their old superstitious idolatry. Moreover, like a worthy emperor, he



he prescribed a certain form of prayer, instead of a catechism, for every man to have, and to learn how to pray and to invoke God. The which form of prayer is recited in the fourth book of Eusebius, *De vita Constantini*, in words as followeth.

*Te solum novimus Deum, te regem cognoscimus, te adiutorem invocamus, abs te viatorias referimus, per te viatorias inimicorum constituimus, tibi presentium bonorum gratiam acceptam ferimus, & per te futura quoque speramus, tibi supplices sumus omnes: imperatorem nostrum Constantinum, ac pientissimos ejus filios, in longissima vita incolumes nobis ac viatores custodire supplices oramus, per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.* In English,

“We acknowledge thee only to be our God, we confess thee to be our king, we invoke and call upon thee our only helper; by thee we obtain our victories, by thee we vanquish and subdue our enemies, to thee we attribute whatsoever present commodities we enjoy, and by thee we hope for good things to come; unto thee we direct all our suits and petitions, most humbly beseeching thee to conserve Constantine our emperor and his noble children in long life to continue, and to give them victory over all their enemies, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

In his own palace he set up an house peculiar for prayer and doctrine, using also to pray and sing with his people. Also in his wars he went not without his tabernacle appointed for the same. The Sunday he commanded to be kept holy of all men, and free from all judiciary causes, from markets, marts, fairs, and all other manual labours, only husbandry excepted; especially charging that no images or monuments of idolatry should be set up.

Men of the clergy and of the ministry in all places he endued with special privileges and immunities, so that if any were brought before the civil magistrate, and listed to appeal to the sentence of his bishop, it should be lawful for him so to do; and that the sentence of the bishop should stand in as great force as if the magistrate or the emperor himself had pronounced it.

But here is to be observed and noted by the way, that the clerks and ministers then newly creeping out of persecution,

cution, were in those days neither in number so great, nor in order of life of the like disposition to these in our days now living.

No less care and provision the said Constantinus also had for the maintenance of schools pertaining to the church, and to the nourishing of good arts and liberal sciences, especially of divinity; not only with stipends and subsidies furnishing them, but also with large privileges and exemptions defending the same, as by the words of his own law is to be seen and read as followeth, *Medicos, grammaticos, & alios professores literarum, & doctores legum, cum uxoribus & liberis, &c.* In English, "Physicians, grammarians, and other professors of liberal arts, and doctors of the law, with their wives and children, and all other their possessions which they have in cities, we command to be freed from all civil charges and functions, neither to receive foreign strangers in provinces, nor to be burdened with any public administration, nor to be cited up to civil judgment, nor to be drawn out or oppressed with any injury. And if any man shall vex them, he shall incur such punishment as the judge at his discretion shall award him. Their stipends moreover and salaries we command truly to be paid them, whereby they may more freely instruct others in arts and sciences," &c.

Over and besides this, so far did his godly zeal and princely care and provision extend to the church of Christ, that he commanded and provided books and volumes of the scripture, diligently and plainly to be written and copied out, to remain in public churches to the use of posterity. Whereupon writing to Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, in a special letter, recorded *Euseb. lib. 4. de vita Constant.* he willeth him with all diligence to procure fifty volumes of parchment well bound and compacted, wherein he should cause to be written out of the scripture, in a fair legible hand, such things as he thought necessary and profitable for the instruction of the church, and alloweth him for that business two public ministers; he also writeth concerning the same to the general of his army, to support and further him with such necessities, as thereunto should appertain, &c.

In viewing, perusing, and writing this story, and in considering the Christian zeal of this emperor, I wish that either this our printing and plenty of books had been in his days, or that this so heroical heart toward Christian religion, as was in this so excellent monarch, might something appear in inferior princes reigning in these our printing-days, &c.

The liberal hand of this emperor, born to do all men good, was no less also open and ready toward the needy poverty of such, which either by loss of parents, or other occasions, were not able to help themselves; to whom he commanded and provided due subvention both of corn and raiment to be ministered out of his own coffers, to the necessary relief of the poor men, women, children, orphans, and widows. *Euseb. de vita Constant. lib. 4.*

Finally, among all the other monuments of his singular clemency and munificence, this is not to be pretermitted, that through all the empire of Rome, and provinces belonging to the same, not only he diminished such taxes, revenues, and impost, as publicly were coming to him, but also clearly remitted and released to the contributors the fourth part of the same.

This present place would require something to be said of the donation of Constantine, whereupon, as upon their chiefest anchor-hold, the bishops of Rome do ground their supreme dominion and right over all the political government of the west parts, and the spiritual government of all the other seas and parts of the world. Which donation to be falsely feigned and forged, and not to proceed from Constantine, many arguments might here be inferred, if leisure from other matters would suffer me.

1. For that no ancient history, nor yet doctor, maketh any mention thereof.

2. Nauclerus reporteth it to be affirmed in the history of Isidorus. But in the old copies of Isidorus no such thing is to be found.

3. Gratianus, the compiler of the decrees, reciteth that decree, not upon any ancient authority, but only under the title of *Palea*.

4. Gelasius is said to give some testimony thereof, in



*Dist. 15. Sancta Romana.* But that clause of the said distinction touching that matter in the old ancient books is not extant.

5. Otho Phrysingenfis, who was about the time of Gratian, after he hath declared the opinion of the favourers of the Papacy, affirming this donation to be given of Constantine to Silvester the pope, induceth consequently the opinion of them that favour the empire, affirming the contrary.

6. How doth this agree, that Constantine did yield up to Silvester all the political dominion over the west, when as the said Constantine at his death, dividing the empire to his three sons, gave the west part of the empire to one, the east part to the second, the middle part to the third?

7. How is it like that Theodosius after them, being a just and a religious prince; would or could have occupied the city of Rome, if it had not been his right, but had belonged to the pope, and so did many other emperors after him?

8. The phrase of this decree being conferred with the phrase and stile of Constantine in his other edicts and letters above specified, doth nothing agree.

9. Seeing the Papists themselves confess, that the decree of this donation was written in Greek, how agreeth that with truth, when as both it was written not to the Grecians, but to the Romans, and also Constantine himself, for lack of the Greek tongue, was fain to use the Latin tongue in the counsell of Nice?

10. The contents of this donation (whosoever was the forger thereof) doth bewray itself; for if it be true which there is confessed, that he was baptized at Rome of Silvester, and the fourth day after his baptism this patrimony was given, (which was before his battle against Maximinus or Licinius, in the year of our Lord three hundred and seventeen, as Nicephorus recordeth), how then accordeth this with that which followeth in the donation, for him to have jurisdiction given over the other four principal sees of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, when as the city of Constantinople was not yet begun before the death

death of Maximinus or Licinius, and was not finished before the eight and twentieth year of the reign of Constantine, in the year of our Lord three hundred thirty and nine? or if it be true, as Hierome counteth, it was finished the three and twentieth year of his reign, which was the year of our Lord three hundred thirty and four, long after this donation by their own account.

11. Furthermore, where in the said constitution it is said that Constantine was baptized at Rome of Silvester, and thereby was purged of leprosy, the fable thereof agreeth not with the truth of history, for so much as Eusebius, *lib. 4. de vita Constantini*, Hieronym. in *Chron. Ruffin. lib. 2. cap. 11. Socrat. lib. 1. cap. 39. Theod. lib. 1. cap. 31. Sozom. lib. 2. cap. 34.* do all together consent, that he was baptized not at Rome, but at Nicomedia; and that, moreover, as by their testimony doth appear, not of Silvester, but of Eusebius bishop of Nicomedia, not before his battle against Maximinus or Licinius, but in the thirty and one year of his reign, a little before his death.

12. Again, whereas Constantine in this donation appointed him to have the principality over the other four patriarchal sees, that maketh Constantine contrary to himself, who in the council of Nice afterward agreed with other bishops, that all the four patriarchal sees should have equal jurisdiction, every one over his own territory and precinct.

13. In sum, briefly to conclude; whoso desireth more abundantly to be satisfied touching this matter, let him read the books of Marsilius Patavinus, intituled *Defensor pacis*, in the year of our Lord 1324; of Laurentius Valla, *anno 1440*; of Antoninus archbishop of Florence, who in his history plainly denieth the tenor of this donation to be found in the old books of the decrees; of Cusanus Cardinalis, *lib. 3. cap. 2.* writing to the council of Basil, *anno 1460*; of Æneas Silvius *In dialogo*; of Hier. Paulus Cattalanus, *anno 1496*; of Raphael Wolateranus, *anno 1500*; of Lutherus, *anno 1537. &c.* All which, by many and evident probations, dispute and prove this donation taken out of a book, *De gestis Silvestri*, and translated (as they feign) by one Bartholomeus Picernus out of Greek into Latin,

not to proceed from Constantinus, but to be a thing untruly pretenced, or rather a fable imagined, or else to be the deed of Pipinus or Charles, or some such other, if it were ever the deed of any.

And thus hast thou (beloved reader) briefly collected the narration of the noble acts and heavenly virtues of this most famous emperor Constantine the Great; a singular spectacle for all Christian princes to behold and imitate, and worthy of perpetual memory in all congregations of Christian saints; whose fervent zeal and piety in general, to all congregations, and to all the servants of Christ, was notable; but especially the affection and reverence of his heart toward them was admirable, which had suffered any thing for the confession of Christ in the persecutions before; them had he principally in price and veneration, inso-much that he embraced and kissed their wounds and stripes, and their eyes, being put out. And if any such bishops, or any other ministers, brought to him any complaints one against another, (as many times they did), he would take their bills of complaint and burn them before their faces; so studious and zealous was his mind to have them agree, whose discord was to him more grief then it was to themselves. All the virtuous acts and memorable doings of this divine and renowned emperor to comprehend or commit to history, it were the matter alone of a great volume; wherefore contented with these above premised, because nothing of him can be said enough, I cease to discourse of him any further.

One thing yet remaineth not to be omitted, wherein (as by the way of a note) I thought good to admonish the learned reader, such as love to be conversant in reading of ancient authors; that in the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, where in the latter end of the book is added a certain oration; *Ad conventum sanctorum*, under the name of Eusebius Pamphilus, here is to be understood, that the said oration is wrongfully intitled upon the name of Eusebius, which in very truth is the oration of Constantinus himself. For the probation whereof, beside the stile and matter therein contained, and tractation heroical, (lively declaring the religious vein of Constantine), I alledge the very testimony



mony of Eusebius himself in his fourth book, *De vita Constantini*, where he in express words not only declareth, that Constantine wrote such an oration intituled, *Ad conventum sanctorum*, but also promiseth in the end of his book to annex the same; declaring, moreover, what difficulty the interpreters had to translate the same from the Roman speech, to their Grecian tongue. *Euseb. de vita Constantini, lib. 4. pag. 211.*

And here an end of these lamentable and doleful persecutions of the primitive church, during the space of three hundred years from the passion of our Saviour Christ, till the coming of this Constantinus; by whom as by the elect instrument of God, it hath so pleased his almighty Majesty, by his determinate purpose, to give rest after long trouble to his church, according to that St Cyprian declareth before to be revealed of God unto his church; that after darkness and stormy tempest, should come peaceable, calm, and stable quietness to his church, meaning this time of Constantine now present. At which time it so pleased the Almighty, that the murdering malice of Satan should at length be restrained, and himself tied up for a thousand years, through his great mercy in Christ, to whom therefore be thanks and praise now and for ever. *Amen.*

An

An account of the martyrdom of John Hufs and Jerome of Prague, who were both burned at Constance; together with a number of letters wrote by John Hufs while he was under persecution.

*The sentence or judgment of the council of Constance given against John Hufs.*

THE most holy and sacred general council of Constance, being congregated and gathered together, representing the Catholic church, for a perpetual memory of the thing, as the verity and truth doth witness, an evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit; hereupon it cometh, that the man of most damnable memory John Wickliff, through his pestiferous doctrine, not through Jesus Christ by the gospel, as the holy fathers in times past have begotten faithful children, but contrary unto the wholesome faith of Jesus Christ, as a most venomous root, hath begotten many pestilent and wicked children, whom he hath left behind him, successors and followers of his perverse and wicked doctrine; against whom this sacred synod of Constance is forced to rise up as against bastards and unlawful children, and with diligent care, with the sharp knife of the ecclesiastical authority to cut up their errors out of the Lord's field, as most hurtful brambles and briers, lest they should grow to the hurt and detriment of others.

For so much then as the holy general council lately celebrated and holden at Rome, it was decreed, that the doctrine of John Wickliff, of most damnable memory, should be condemned; and that his books, which contained the same doctrine, should be burned as heretical; and this decree was approved and confirmed by the sacred authority of the whole council: nevertheless one John Hufs, here personally present in this sacred council, not the disciple of Christ but of John Wickliff, an arch-heretic, after, and  
contrary

contrary, or against the condemnation and decree, hath taught, preached, and affirmed the articles of Wickliff, which were condemned by the church of God, and in times past by certain most reverend fathers in Christ, lords, archbishops, and bishops, of divers kingdoms and realms, masters of divinity of divers universities; especially resisting in his open sermons, and also with his adherents and complices in the schools, the condemnation of the said articles of Wickliff's, oftentimes published in the said university of Prague, and hath declared him the said Wickliff, for the favour and commendation of his doctrine, before the whole multitude of the clergy and people, to be a catholic man, and a true evangelical doctor. He hath also published and affirmed certain and many of his articles, worthily condemned, to be catholic, the which are notoriously contained in the books of the said John Hufs.

Wherefore, after diligent deliberation and full information first had upon the premisses by the reverend fathers and lords in Christ of the holy church of Rome, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, doctors of divinity, and of both laws, in great number assembled and gathered together, this most sacred and holy council of Constance declareth and determineth the articles above said (the which, after due conference had, are found in his books written with his own hand, the which also the said John Hufs, in open audience, before this holy council, hath confessed to be in his books) not to be catholic, neither worthy to be taught, but that many of them are erroneous, some of them wicked, other some offensive to godly ears, many of them temerarious and seditious, and the greater part of them notoriously heretical, and even now of late by the holy fathers and general councils reprov'd and condemned. And for so much as the said articles are expressly contained in the books of the said John Hufs, therefore this said sacred council doth condemn and reprove all those books which he wrote, in what form or phrase soever they be, or whether they be translated by others; and doth determine and decree, that they all shall be solemnly and openly burned in the presence of the clergy and people of the city of Constance, and elsewhere; adding, moreover,  
for



for the premisses, that all his doctrine is worthy to be despised and eschewed of all faithful Christians. And to the intent this most pernicious and wicked doctrine may be utterly excluded and shut out of the church, this sacred synod doth straitly command, that diligent inquisition be made by the ordinaries of the places by the ecclesiastical censure, for such treatises and works; and that such as are found be consumed and burned with fire. And if there be any found, which shall contemn or despise this sentence or decree, this sacred synod ordaineth and decreeth, that the ordinaries of the places, and the inquisitors of heresies, shall proceed against every such person as suspect of heresy.

Wherefore, after due inquisition made against the said John Hufs, and full information had by the commissaries and doctors of both laws, and also by the sayings of the witnesses which were worthy of credit, and many other things openly read before the said John Hufs, and before the fathers and prelates of this sacred council, (by the which allegations of the witnesses it appeareth that the said John Hufs, hath taught many evil and offensive, seditious and perilous heresies, and hath preached the same by a long time), this most sacred and holy synod, lawfully congregate and gathered together in the Holy Ghost, the name of Christ being invocate and called upon, by this their sentence, which here is set forth in writing, determineth, pronounceth, declareth, and decreeth, that John Hufs was and is a true and manifest heretic, and that he hath preached openly errors and heresies lately condemned by the church of God, and many other seditious, temerarious, and offensive things, to no small offence of the divine Majesty, and of the universal church, and detriment of the catholic faith and church, neglecting and despising the keys of the church, and ecclesiastical censure. In the which his error he hath continued with a mind altogether indurate and hardened by the space of many years, much offending the faithful Christians by his obstinacy and stubbornness, when as he made his appeal unto the Lord Jesus Christ, as the most high Judge, omitting and leaving all ecclesiastical means. In the which his appeal he alledgeth many false, injurious, and

and offensive matters, in contempt of the apostolic see and the ecclesiastical censures and keys.

Whereupon, both for the premisses and many other things, the said synod pronounceth John Hufs to be an heretic, and judgeth him by these presents to be condemned and judged as an heretic, and reproveth the said appeal as injurious, offensive, and done in derision unto the ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and judgeth the said Hufs not only to have seduced the Christian people by his writings and preachings, and specially in the kingdom of Boheme, neither to have been a true preacher of the gospel of Christ unto the said people, according to the exposition of the holy doctors, but also to have been a seducer of them, and also an obstinate and stiffnecked person, yea, and such an one as doth not desire to return again to the lap of our holy mother the church, neither to abjure the errors and heresies which he hath openly preached and defended. Wherefore this most sacred council decreeth and declareth, that the said John Hufs shall be famously deposed and degraded from his priestly orders and dignity, &c.

Whilst these things were thus read, John Hufs, albeit he were forbidden to speak, notwithstanding did often interrupt them; and specially when he was reprovved of obstinacy, he said with a loud voice, I was never obstinate, but as always heretofore, even so now again I desire to be taught by the holy scriptures, and I do profess myself to be so desirous of the truth, that if I might by one only word subvert the errors of all heretics, I would not refuse to enter into what peril or danger soever it were. When his books were condemned, he said, Wherefore have you condemned those books, when as you have not proved by any one article, that they are contrary to the scriptures, or articles of faith? And, moreover, what injury is this that you do to me, that you have condemned these books written in the Bohemian tongue, which you never saw, neither yet read? And oftentimes looking up unto heaven, he prayed.

When the sentence and judgment was ended, kneeling down upon his knees, he said, Lord Jesus Christ, forgive mine

enemies, by whom thou knowest that I am falsely accused, and that they have used false witnesses and slanders against me; forgive them, I say, for thy great mercy's sake. This his prayer and oration the greater part, and specially the chief of the priests, did deride and mock.

At the last, the seven bishops which were chosen out to degrade him of his priesthood, commanded him to put on the garments pertaining unto priesthood; which thing when he had done, until he came to the putting on of the albe, he called to his remembrance the white vesture which Herod put upon Jesus Christ to mock him withal. So likewise in all other things he did comfort himself by the example of Christ. When he had now put on all his priestly vestures, the bishops exhorted him that he should yet alter and change his mind and purpose, and provide for his honour and safeguard. Then he, (according as the manner of the ceremony is), going up to the top of the scaffold, being full of tears, spake unto the people in this sort.

“ These lords and bishops do exhort and counsel me, that I should here confess before you all that I have erred; the which thing to do, if it were such as might be done with the infamy and reproach of man only, they might peradventure easily persuade me thereunto; but now truly I am in the sight of the Lord my God, without whose great ignominy and grudge of mine own conscience, I can by no means do that which they require of me. For I do well know, that I never taught any of those things which they have falsely alledged against me, but I have always preached, taught, written, and thought contrary thereunto. With what countenance then should I behold the heavens? with what face should I look upon them whom I have taught, whereof there is a great number, if through me it should come to pass that those things, which they have hitherto known to be most certain and sure, should now be made uncertain? Should I, by this my example, astonish or trouble so many souls, so many consciences, endued with the most firm and certain knowledge of the scriptures and gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and his most pure doctrine, armed against all the assaults of Satan? I will never do it; neither



neither commit any such kind of offence, that I should seem more to esteem this vile carcass appointed unto death, than their health and salvation." At this most godly word he was forced again to hear, by the consent of the bishops, that he did obstinately and maliciously persevere in his pernicious and wicked errors.

Then he was commanded to come down to the execution of his judgment, and in his coming down, one of the seven bishops afore rehearsed, first took away the chalice from him which he held in his hand, saying, O cursed Judas, why hast thou forsaken the counsel and ways of peace and hast counselled with the Jews? we take away from thee this chalice of thy salvation. But John Hufs received this curse in this manner: But I trust unto God the Father omnipotent, and my Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake I do suffer these things, that he will not take away the chalice of his redemption, but have a stedfast and firm hope that this day I shall drink thereof in his kingdom. Then followed the other bishops in order, which every one of them took away the vestments from him which they had put on, each one of them giving him their curse. Whereunto John Hufs answered, That he did willingly embrace and hear those blasphemies for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the last they came to the rasing of his shaven crown. But before the bishops would go in hand with it, there was a great contention between them, with what instrument it should be done, with a razor or with a pair of shears.

In the mean season, John Hufs turning himself toward the emperor, said, I marvel that for so much as they be all of like cruel mind and stomach, yet they cannot agree upon their kind of cruelty. Notwithstanding, at the last they agreed to cut off the skin of the crown of his head with a pair of shears. And when they had done that, they added these words, Now hath the church taken away all her ornaments and privileges from him. Now there resteth nothing else, but that he be delivered over unto the secular power. But before they did that, there yet remained another knack of reproach. For they caused to be made a certain crown of paper, almost a cubit deep, in the which

were painted three devils of wonderful ugly shape, and this title set over their heads, *Hereſarcha*. The which when he ſaw, he ſaid, My Lord Jeſus Chriſt for my ſake did wear a crown of thorns; why ſhould not I then for his ſake again wear this light crown, be it never ſo ignominious? Truly I will do it, and that willingly. When it was ſet upon his head, the biſhops ſaid, Now we commit thy ſoul unto the devil. But I, ſaid John Huſs (liſting his eyes up towards the heavens) do commit my ſpirit into thy hands, O Lord Jeſus Chriſt, unto thee I commend my ſpirit which thou haſt redeemed. Theſe contumelious opprobries thus ended, the biſhops turning themſelves towards the emperor, ſaid, This moſt ſacred ſynod of Conſtance leaveth now John Huſs, which hath no more any office, or to do in the church of God, unto the civil judgment and power. Then the emperor commanded Lodovicus duke of Bavaria, which ſtood before him in his robes, holding the golden apple with the croſs in his hand, that he ſhould receive John Huſs of the biſhops, and deliver him unto them which ſhould do the execution. By whom as he was led to the place of execution, before the church-doors he ſaw his books burning; whereat he ſmiled and laughed. And all men that he paſſed by he exhorted, not to think that he ſhould die for any error or hereſy, but only for the hatred and ill-will of his adverſaries, which had charged him with moſt falſe and unjuſt crimes. All the whole city in manner being in armour, followed him.

The place appointed for the execution was before the gate Gotlebian, between the gardens and the gates of the ſuburbs. When as John Huſs was come thither, kneeling down upon his knees, and liſting his eyes up unto heaven, he prayed, and ſaid certain pſalms, and ſpecially the fifty and thirty-fiſt pſalms. And they which ſtood hard by, heard him oftentimes in his prayer, with a merry and cheerful countenance, repeat this verſe, *Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my ſpirit, &c.* Which thing when the lay-people beheld which ſtood next unto him, they ſaid, What he hath done afore, we know not, but now we ſee and hear that he doth ſpeak and pray very devoutly and godly. Other ſome wiſhed that he had a confeſſor. There was a certain  
priest

priest by, sitting on horseback, in a green gown, drawn about with red silk, which said, He ought not to be heard, because he is an heretic. Yet notwithstanding, whilst he was in prison, he was both confessed, and also absolved by a certain doctor, a monk, as Hus himself doth witness in a certain epistle which he wrote unto his friends out of prison. Thus Christ reigneth unknown unto the world, even in the midst of his enemies. In the mean time whilst he prayed, as he bowed his neck backward to look upward unto heaven, the crown of paper fell off from his head upon the ground. Then one of the soldiers taking it up again, said, Let us put it again upon his head, that he may be burned with his masters the devils, whom he hath served.

When as by the commandment of the tormentors he was risen up from the place of his prayer, with a loud voice he said, Lord Jesus Christ assist and help me, that with a constant and patient mind, by thy most gracious help, I may bear and suffer this cruel and ignominious death, whereunto I am condemned for the preaching of thy most holy gospel and word. Then, as before, he declared the cause of his death unto the people. In the mean season the hangman stripped him of his garments, and turning his hands behind his back, tied him fast unto the stake with ropes that were made wet. And whereas by chance he was turned towards the east, certain cried out that he should not look towards the east, for he was an heretic; so he was turned towards the west. Then was his neck tied with a chain unto the stake; the which chain when he beheld, smiling he said, That he would willingly receive the same chain for Jesus Christ's sake, who, he knew, was bound with a far worse chain. Under his feet they set two faggots, admixing straw withal, and so likewise from the feet up to the chin he was inclosed in round about with wood. But before the wood was set on fire, Lodovicus duke of Bavaria, with another gentleman with him, which was the son of Clement, came and exhorted John Hus, that he would yet be mindful of his safeguard, and renounce his errors. To whom he said, What error should I renounce, when as I know myself guilty of none? For as for those things



things which are falsely alledged against me, I know that I never did so much as once think them, much less preach them. For this was the principal end and purpose of my doctrine, that I might teach all men penance and remission of sins, according to the verity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the exposition of the holy doctors; wherefore with a cheerful mind and courage I am here ready to suffer death. When he had spoken these words, they left him, and shaking hands together, they departed.

Then was the fire kindled, and John Hufs began to sing with a loud voice, *Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, have mercy upon me.* And when he began to say the same the third time, the wind drove the flame so upon his face, that it choked him. Yet notwithstanding he moved a while after, by the space that a man might almost say three times the Lord's prayer. When all the wood was burned and consumed, the upper part of the body was left hanging in the chain; the which they threw down stake and all, and making a new fire, burned it, the head being first cut in small gobbets, that it might the sooner be consumed unto ashes. The heart, which was found amongst the bowels, being well beaten with staves and clubs, was at last pricked upon a sharp stick, and roasted at a fire apart until it was consumed. Then with great diligence gathering the ashes together, they cast them into the river of Rhene, that the least remnant of the ashes of that man should not be left upon the earth; whose memory notwithstanding cannot be abolished out of the minds of the godly, neither by fire, neither by water, neither by any kind of torment.

This godly servant and martyr of Christ was condemned by the cruel council, and burned at Constance, anno 1415, about the month of July.

How grievously this death of John Hufs was taken among the nobles of Boheme and of Moravia, hereafter (Christ willing) shall appear by their letters which they sent unto the council, and by the letters of Sigismund the king of Romans, written unto them. Wherein he labour-eth, all that he can, to purge and excuse himself of Hufs's death. Albeit he was not altogether free from that cruel fact, and innocent from that blood; yet notwithstanding  
he

he pretendeth in words so to wipe away that blot from him, that the greatest part of that crime seemeth to rest upon the bloody prelates of that council, as the words of the king do purport, in form as followeth.

*I*Nterea (inquit) nobis adhuc in partibus Rheni existentibus, pervenit ad Constantiam, &c. i. e. In the mean time as we were about the coasts of Rhene, John Hus went to Constance, and there was arrested, as is not to you unknown. Who if he had first resorted unto us, and had gone with us up to the council, perhaps it had been otherwise with him. And God knoweth what grief and sorrow it was to our heart, to see it so to fall out, as with no words can be well expressed. Whereof all the Bohemians, which were there present, can bear us witness, seeing and beholding how careful and solicitous we were in labouring for him; insomuch that we many times with anger and fury departed out of the council; and not only out of the council, but also went out of the city of Constance taking his part, unto such time as the rulers of the council sending unto us, said, That if we would not permit them to prosecute that which right required in the council, what should they then do in the place? Whereupon thus we thought with ourselves, that here was nothing else for us more to do, nor yet to speak in this case, forasmuch as the whole council otherwise had been dissolved. Where is to be noted, moreover, that in Constance the same time there was not one clerk or two, but there were ambassadors from all kings and princes in Christendom, especially since the time that (Petrus de Luna giving over) all those kings and princes which took his part, came to us; so that whatsoever good was to be done, it was now to be passed in this present council, &c. *Ex regist. Imp. Sigismund. ad nobiles, &c.*

By this it may appear that the emperor, as partly ashamed and sorry of that which was done, would gladly have cleared himself thereof, and have washed his hands with Pilate; yet he could not so clear himself, but that a great portion of that murder remained in him to be noted, and well worthy of reprehension, as may appear by his last words spoken

ken in the council to John Hufs, whereof John Hufs in his epistles complaineth, writing to certain of his friends in Boheme in his thirty third epistle, as by his words here following may appear.

**I** Desire you yet again, for the love of God, that the lords of Boheme joining together will desire the king for a final audience to be given me. For so much as he alone said to me in the council, that they should give me audience shortly, and that I should answer for myself briefly in writing; it will be to his great confusion, if he shall not perform that which he hath spoken. But I fear that word of his will be as firm and sure, as the other was concerning my safe conduct granted by him. Certain there were in Bohemia, which willed me to beware of his safe conduct. And others said, He will surely give you to your enemies. And the lord Mikest Dwakie told me before M. Jessenitz, saying, Master, know it for certain you shall be condemned. And this I suppose he spake, knowing before the intention of the king. I hoped well that he had been well affected toward the law of God and the truth, and had therein good intelligence; now I conceive that he is not greatly skilful, nor so prudently circumspect in himself. He condemned me before mine enemies did. Who if it had pleased him, might have kept the moderation of Pilate the Gentile, which said, *I find no cause in this man*; or at least if he had said but thus, Behold, I have given him his safe conduct safely to return; and if he will not abide the decision of the council, I will send him home to the king of Bohemia with your sentence and attestations, that he with his clergy may judge him. But now I hear by the relation of Henry Leffi, and of others, that he will ordain for me sufficient audience; and if I will not submit myself to the judgment of the council, he will send me safe the contrary way, &c.

This John Hufs being in prison, wrote divers treatises, as of the commandments of the Lord's prayer, of mortal sin, of matrimony, of the knowledge and love of God, of three enemies of mankind, the world, the flesh, and the devil,



devil, of penance, of the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, of the sufficiency of the law of God to rule the church, &c. He wrote also divers epistles and letters to the lords, and to his friends of Boheme; and in his writings did foreshew many things before to come, touching the reformation of the church; and seemeth in the prison to have had divers propheticall revelations shewed to him of God. Certain of which his letters and predictions, I thought here underneath to insert, in such sort, as neither in reciting all I will overcharge the volume too much; nor yet in reciting of none will I be so brief, but that the reader may have some taste, and take some profit of the Christian writings and doings of this blessed man; first beginning with the letter of the lord Clum, concerning the safe-conduct of John Hufs.

*A letter of the lord John de Clum, concerning the safe-conduct of John Hufs.*

**T**O all and singular that shall see and hear these presents, I John de Clum do it to understand, how Mr John Hufs bachelor of divinity, under the safe-conduct and protection of the renowned prince and lord Sigismund of Romans, semper Augustus, and king of Hungary, &c. my gracious lord, and under the protection, defence, and safeguard of the holy empire of Rome, having the letters-patent of the said my lord king of Romans, &c. came unto Constance to render a full count of his faith in public audience to all that would require the same. This the said Mr John Hufs, in this imperial city of Constance, under the safe-conduct of the said my lord king of Romans, hath been and yet is detained. And although the pope with the cardinals have been seriously required by solemn ambassadors of the said my lord king of Romans, &c. in the king's name and behalf, that the said Mr John Hufs should be set at liberty, and be restored unto me; yet notwithstanding, they have and yet do refuse hitherto to set him at liberty, to the great contempt and derogation of the safe-conduct of the king, and of the safeguard and protection of the empire,

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empire, or imperial majesty. Wherefore I John aforefaid, in the name of the king, do here publish and make it known, that the apprehending, and detaining of the faid Mr John Hufs, was done wholly againſt the will of the fore-named king of Romans my lord, ſeeing it is done in the contempt of the ſafe-conduct of his ſubjects, and of the protection of the empire, becauſe that the ſaid my lord was then abſent far from Conſtance, and if he had been there preſent, would never have permitted the ſame. And when he ſhall come, it is to be doubted of no man, but that he, for this great injury and contempt of this ſafe-conduct done to him and to the empire, will grievouſly be moleſted for the ſame.

Given at Conſtance, in the day of the nativity of the Lord 1414.

In this inſtrument above prefixed, note (gentle reader) three things.

*First*, The goodneſs of this gentle lord John de Clum, being ſo fervent and zealous in the cauſe of John Hufs, or rather in the cauſe of Chriſt.

*Secondly*, The ſafe conduct granted unto the ſaid John Hufs, under the faith and protection of the emperor, and of the empire.

*Thirdly*, Here is to be ſeen the contempt and rebellion of theſe proud prelates, in diſobeying the authority of their high magiſtrate, who, contrary to his ſafe-conduct given, and the mind of the emperor, did arreſt and imprifon this good man, before the coming of the ſaid emperor, and before that John Hufs was heard. Let us now, as we have promiſed, adjoin ſome of the epiſtles of this godly man.

*An epiſtle of John Hufs, unto the people of Prague, in his own vulgar ſpeech.*

**G**RACE and peace from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you being delivered from ſin may walk in his grace, and may grow in all modeſty and virtue, and after this may enjoy eternal life.

Dearly

Dearly beloved, I beseech you which walk after the law of God, that you cast not away the care of the salvation of your souls, when as you hearing the word of God are premonished wisely to understand that you be not deceived by false apostles; which do not reprehend the sins of men, but rather do extenuate and diminish them; which flatter the priests, and do not shew to the people their offences; which magnify themselves, boast their own works, and marvellously extol their own worthiness, but follow not Christ in his humility, in poverty, in the cross, and other manifold afflictions. Of whom our merciful Saviour did premonish us before, saying, *False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* And when he had forewarned his well-beloved disciples, he said unto them, *Beware and take heed of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves; ye shall know them by their fruits.* And truth it is, that the faithful of Christ have much need diligently to beware and take heed unto themselves; for as our Saviour himself doth say, *The elect also, if it were possible, shall be brought into error.* Wherefore, my well-beloved, be circumspect and watchful, that ye be not circumvented with the crafty trains of the devil; and the more circumspect ye ought to be, for that Antichrist laboureth the more to trouble you. The last judgment is near at hand; death shall swallow up many; but to the elect children of God the kingdom of God draweth near, because for them he gave his own body. Fear not death, love together one another, persevere in understanding the good-will of God without ceasing. Let the terrible and horrible day of judgment be always before your eyes, that you sin not; and also the joy of eternal life, whereunto you must endeavour. Furthermore, let the passion of our Saviour be never out of your minds; that you may bear with him, and for him gladly, whatsoever shall be laid upon you. For if you shall consider well in your minds his cross and afflictions, nothing shall be grievous unto you, and patiently you shall give place to tribulations, cursings, rebukes, stripes, and prisonment, and shall not doubt to give your lives moreover for his holy truth, if need require. Know ye, well-beloved, that Anti-



christ being stirred up against you, deviseth divers persecutions. And many he hath not hurt, no not the least hair of their heads, as by mine own example I can testify, although he hath been vehemently incensed against me. Wherefore I desire you all, with your prayers to make intercession for me to the Lord, to give me intelligence, sufferance, patience, and constancy, that I never swerve from his divine verity. He hath brought me now to Constance. In all my journey, openly and manifestly I have not feared to utter my name as becometh the servant of God. In no place I kept myself secret, nor used any dissimulation. But never did I find in any place more pestilent and manifest enemies than at Constance. Which enemies neither should I have had there, had it not been for certain of our own Bohemians, hypocrites and deceivers, who for benefits received, and stirred up with covetousness, with boasting and bragging have persuaded the people that I went about to seduce them out of the right way; but I am in good hope, that, through the mercy of our God, and by your prayers, I shall persist strongly in the immutable verity of God unto the last breath. Finally, I would not have you ignorant, that whereas every one here is put in his office, I only as an outcast am neglected, &c. I commend you to the merciful Lord Jesus Christ, our true God, and the Son of the immaculate virgin Mary, which hath redeemed us by his most bitter death, without all our merits, from eternal pains, from the thralldom of the devil, and from sin.

From Constance the year of our Lord 1415.

*Another letter of John Hufs to his benefactors.*

**M**Y gracious benefactors and defenders of the truth, I exhort you by the bowels of Jesus Christ, that now ye setting aside the vanities of this present world, will give your service to the eternal King, Christ the Lord. Trust not in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no health. For the sons of men are dissemblers and deceitful. To-day they are, to-morrow they perish, but God remaineth for ever. Who hath his servants, not for any need

need he hath of them, but for their own profit: unto whom he performeth that which he promiseth, and fulfilleth that which he purposeth to give. He casteth off no faithful servant from him, for he saith, *Where I am, there also shall my servant be.* And the Lord maketh every servant of his to be the lord of all his possession, giving himself unto him, and with himself, all things; that without all tediousness, fear, and without all defect, he may possess all things, rejoicing with all saints in joy infinite. O happy is that servant, whom, when the Lord shall come, he shall find watching. Happy is the servant which shall receive that King of glory with joy. Wherefore, well-beloved lords and benefactors, serve you that King in fear, which shall bring you, as I trust, now to Boheme at this present by his grace in health, and hereafter, to eternal life of glory. Fare you well, for I think that this is the last letter that I shall write to you; who to-morrow, as I suppose, shall be purged in hope of Jesus Christ, through bitter death for my sins. The things that happened to me this night I am not able to write. Sigismund hath done all things with me deceitfully, God forgive him, and only for your sakes. You also heard the sentence which he awarded against me. I pray you have no suspicion of faithful Vitus.

*Another letter to the lord John de Clum.*

**M**ost gracious benefactor in Christ Jesus, dearly beloved, yet I rejoyce not a little, that by the grace of God I may write unto your honour. By your letter, which I received yesterday, I understand, *first*, How the iniquity of the great strumpet, that is, of the malignant congregation, (whereof mention is made in the Apocalyps), is detected, and shall be more detected. With the which strumpet the kings of the earth do commit fornication, fornicating spiritually from Christ, and, as is there said, sliding back from the truth, and consenting to the lies of Antichrist, through his seduction, and through fear, or through hope of confederacy, for getting of worldly honour. *Secondly*, I perceived by your letter how the enemies of the truth be-  
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gin now to be troubled. *Thirdly*, I perceived the settled constancy of your charity, wherewith you profess the truth boldly. *Fourthly*, With joy I perceived, that you mind now to give over the vanity and painful service of this present world, and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ quietly at home. Whom to serve is to reign, as Gregory saith. Whom he that serveth faithfully, hath Jesus Christ himself in the kingdom of heaven to minister unto him, as he himself saith, *Blessed is that servant, whom when the Lord shall come, he shall find waking, and so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he rising shall gird himself, and shall minister to him.* This do not the kings of the world to their servants; whom only they do love so long as they are profitable and necessary for their commodities, &c.

*Another epistle of John Huss, wherein he declareth why God suffereth not his to perish, bringing divers examples, wherewith he doth comfort and confirm both himself and others.*

**T**HE Lord God be with you. Many causes there were, well-beloved in God my dear friends, which moved me to think that those letters were the last, which before I sent unto you, looking that same time for instant death. But now understanding the same to be deferred, I take it for great comfort unto me, that I have some leisure more to talk with you by letters; and therefore I write again to you, to declare and testify at least my gratitude and mindful duty toward you. And as touching death, God doth know why he doth defer it both to me, and to my well-beloved brother Mr Jerome, who I trust will die holily and without blame; and do know also that he doth, and suffereth now more valiantly, than I myself a wretched sinner. God hath given us a long time, that we might call to memory our sins the better, and repent for the same more fervently. He hath granted us time, that our long and great temptation should put away our grievous sins, and bring the more consolation. He hath given us time, wherein we should remember the horrible rebukes of our merciful King and Lord Jesus, and should ponder his cruel death, and



And so more patiently might learn to bear our afflictions; and moreover that we might keep in remembrance, how that the joys of the life to come are not given after the joys of this world immediately, but through many tribulations the saints have entered into the kingdom of heaven; for some of them have been cut and chopt all to pieces, some their eyes bored through, some sod, some roasted, some slain alive, some buried quick, stoned, crucified, grinded betwixt millstones, drawn and haled hither and thither unto execution, drowned in waters, strangled and hanged, torn in pieces, vexed with rebukes before their death, pinned in prisons, and afflicted in bands. And who is able to recite all the torments and sufferings of the holy saints, which they suffered under the Old and New Testament for the verity of God; namely, those which have at any time rebuked the malice of the priests, or have preached against their wickedness? And it will be a marvel if any man now also shall escape unpunished, whosoever dare boldly resist the wickedness and perversity, especially of those priests, which can abide no correction. And I am glad that they are compelled now to read my books, in the which their malice is somewhat described; and I know they have read the same more exactly and willingly, than the holy gospel, seeking therein to find out errors.

Given at Constance, upon Thursday, the 28th day of June, anno 1415.

*Another letter of John Hufs, wherein he rehearseth what injuries he received of the council, and of the deputies.*

**I**F my letter be not yet sent to Boheme, keep it and send it not, for hurt may come thereof, &c.

*Item,* If the king do ask, who ought to be my judge, since that the council neither did call me, nor did cite me, neither was I ever accused before the council, and yet the council hath imprisoned me, and hath appointed their proctor against me.

*Item,* I desire you, right noble and gracious lord John, if audience shall be given me, that the king will be there present

present himself, and that I may have a place appointed near unto him, that he may hear me well, and understand what I say; and that you also, with the lord Henry, and with lord Wencelaus, and other moe, if you may, will be present, and hear what the Lord Jesus Christ, my procurator and advocate, and most gracious judge, will put in my mouth to speak, that whether I live or die, you may be true and upright witnesses with me, lest lying lips shall say hereafter that I swerved away from the truth which I have preached.

*Item*, Know you that before witnesses and notaries in prison, I desired the commissioners that they would depute unto me a proctor and an advocate; who promised so to do, and afterward would not perform it. Wherefore I have committed myself to the Lord Jesus Christ, that he will be my procurator and advocate, and judge of my cause.

*Item*, Know you, that they have, as I suppose, no other quarrel against me, but only this, that I stood against the pope's bull, which pope John sent down to Boheme, to sanctify war with the sign of the cross, and full remission of sins to all them which would take the holy cross, to fight for the patrimony of the Romish church against Ladislaus king of Naples; and they have mine own writing, which was read against me, and I do acknowledge it to be mine. *Secondly*, They have also against me, that I have continued so long in excommunication, and yet did take upon me to minister in the church, and say mass. *Thirdly*, They have against me, because I did appeal from the pope to Christ. For they read my appeal before me, the which with a willing mind, smiling, I confessed before them all to be mine. *Fourthly*, Because I left a certain letter behind me, which was read in the church of Bethleem; the which letter my adversaries have very evil-favouredly translated, and sinisterly expounded, in the which I did write that I went out with a safe-conduct. Whereunto you yourselves can say and bear me record, that I, in my going out, had no safe-conduct of the pope; neither yet did I know whether you should go out with me when I wrote that letter.

*Item*, If audience may be given to me, and that after the same audience the king would suffer me not to be returned again into prison, but that I may have your counsels, and others

thers my friends; and if it may please God that I may say something to my sovereign lord the king, for the behalf of Christianity, and for his own profit, &c.

*Another letter of John Hufs, wherein he confirmeth the Bohemians, and describeth the wickedness of that council.*

**J**ohn Hufs, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful in Boheme, which love the Lord, greeting through the grace of God. It cometh in my mind, wherein I must needs admonish you, that be the faithful and beloved of the Lord, how that the council of Constance being full of pride, avarice, and all abomination, hath condemned my books written in the Boheme tongue for heretical, which books they never saw, nor ever heard them read. And if they had heard them, yet they could not understand the same, being some Italians, some Frenchmen, some Britons, some Spaniards, Germans, with other people of other nations more; unless peradventure John bishop of Litomish understood them, which was present in that council, and certain other Bohemians, and priests which are against me, and labour all they may how to deprave both the verity of God, and the honesty of our country of Boheme. Which I judge in the hope of God, to be a godly land, right well given to the true knowledge of the faith, for that it doth so greatly desire the word of God, and honest manners. And if you were here at Constance, ye should see the grievous abomination of this council, which they call so holy, and such as cannot err. Of the which council I have heard it by the Swechers reported, that the city of Constance is not able in thirty years to be purged of those abominations in that council committed. And all be offended almost with that council, being sore grieved to behold such execrable things perpetrate in the same.

When I stood first to answer before mine adversaries, seeing all things there done with no order, and hearing them also outrageously crying out, I said plainly unto them, that I looked for more honest behaviour, and better order and discipline in that council. Then the chief cardinal answered

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Sayst



Sayst thou so? But in the tower thou spakest more modestly. To whom said I, In the tower no man cried out against me, whereas now all do rage against me. My faithful and beloved in Christ, be not afraid with their sentence in condemning my books. They shall be scattered hither and thither abroad, like light butterflies, and their statutes shall endure as spider-webs. They went about to shake my constancy from the verity of Christ; but they could not overcome the virtue of God in me. They would not reason with the scriptures against me, as divers honourable lords can witness with me, which being ready to suffer contumely for the truth of God, took my part stoutly; namely, lord Wenceslaus de Duba, and lord John de Clum; for they were let in by king Sigismund into the council. And when I said, that I was desirous to be instructed, if I did in any thing err; then they heard the chief cardinal answer again; Because thou wouldst be informed, there is no remedy but that thou must first revoke thy doctrine, according to the determination of fifty bachelors of divinity appointed. O high instruction!

After like manner St Katharine also should have denied and revoked the verity of God and faith in Christ, because the fifty masters likewise did withstand her; which notwithstanding, that good virgin would never do, standing in her faith unto death; but she did win those her masters unto Christ, when as I cannot win these my masters by any means. These things I thought good to write unto you, that you might know how they have overcome me, with no grounded scripture, nor with any reason; but only did essay with terrors and deceits to persuade me to revoke and to abjure. But our merciful God, whose law I have magnified, was and is with me, and I trust, so will continue, and will keep me in his grace unto death.

Written at Constance, after the feast of John Baptist, in prison and in bonds, daily looking for death; although for the secret judgments of God, I dare not say whether this be my last epistle; for now also almighty God is able to deliver me.

*Another*

*Another letter of John Hufs, wherein he comforteth his friends, and willeth them not to be troubled for the condemning of his books; and also declareth the wickedness of the clergy.*

**M**Aster John Hufs, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful which love him and his statutes, wisheth the truth and grace of God.

Beloved, I thought it needful to warn you that you should not fear or be discouraged because the adversaries have decreed that my books shall be burnt. Remember how the Israelites burned the preachings of the prophet Jeremiah, and yet they could not avoid the things that were prophesied of in them; for after they were burnt, the Lord commanded to write the same prophecy again, and that larger: which was also done; for Jeremiah sitting in prison spake, and Baruch which was ready at his hand, wrote. This is written either in the thirty-fifth or forty-fifth chapter of the vision of Jeremiah. It is also written in the books of the Maccabees, that the wicked did burn the law of God, and killed them that had the same. Again, under the New Testament, they burned the saints, with the books of the law of God. The cardinals condemned and committed to fire certain of St Gregory's books, and had burnt them all if they had not been preserved of God by the means of Peter, Gregory's minister. Having these things before your eyes, take heed lest through fear you omit to read my books, and deliver them to the adversaries to be burnt. Remember the sayings of our merciful Saviour, by which he forewarneth us, Matth. xxiv. *There shall be (saith he) before the day of judgment, great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning, until this day, neither shall be afterwards: so that even the elect of God should be deceived, if it were possible. But for their sakes those days shall be shortened.* When you remember these things, (beloved), be not afraid, for I trust in God that that school of Antichrist shall be afraid of you, and suffer you to be in quiet, neither shall the council of Constance extend to Bohemia. For I think, that many of them which

are of the council, shall die before they shall get from you my books. And they shall depart from the council, and be scattered abroad, throughout the parts of the world, like storks, and then they shall know when winter cometh, what they did in summer. Consider that they have judged their head the pope worthy of death, for many horrible facts that he hath done. Go to now; answer to this you preachers, which preach, that the pope is the god of the earth; that he may, as the lawyers say, make sale of the holy things; that he is the head of the whole holy church in verity, well governing the same; that he is the heart of the church in quickening the same spiritually; that he is the well-spring from which floweth all virtue and goodness; that he is the sun of the holy church; that he is the safe refuge to which every Christian man ought to flee for succour. Behold now that head is cut off with the sword, now the god of the earth is bound, now his sins are declared openly, now that well-spring is dried up, that sun darkened, that heart is plucked out and thrown away, lest that any man should seek succour thereat. The council hath condemned that head, and that for this offence, because he took money for indulgences, bishoprics, and other such like. But they condemned him by order of judgment which were themselves the buyers and sellers of the same merchandise. There was present John bishop of Lytomissia, who went twice about to buy the bishopric of Prague, but others prevented him. O wicked men, why did they not first cast out the beam out of their own eyes? These men have accursed and condemned the seller, but they themselves which were the buyers and consenters to the bargain, are without danger. What shall I say, that they do use this manner of buying and selling at home in their own countries? For at Constance there is one bishop that bought, and another which sold, and the pope for allowing of both their facts took bribes on both sides. It came so to pass in Bohemia also, as you know. I would that in that council God had said, He that amongst you is without sin, let him give the sentence against pope John; then surely they had gone all out of the council-house, one after another. Why did they bow the knee to him always, before this his fall,



fall, kifs his feet, and call him the most holy father, seeing they saw apparently before, that he was an heretic, that he was a man-killer, that he was a wicked sinner; all which things now they have found in him? Why did the cardinals choose him to be pope, knowing before that he had killed the holy father? Why suffered they him to meddle with holy things, in bearing the office of the popedom? for to this end they are his counsellors, that they should admonish him of that which is right. Are not they themselves as guilty of these faults as he, seeing that they accounted these things vices in him, and were partakers of some of them themselves? Why durst no man lay ought to his charge, before he had fled from Constance; but as soon as the secular power, by the sufferance of God, laid hold upon him, then, and never afore, they conspired all together that he should not live any longer? Surely, even at this day is the malice, the abomination and filthiness of Antichrist revealed in the pope, and others of this council.

Now the faithful servants of God may understand what our Saviour Christ meant by this saying, *When you shall see the abomination of desolation, which is spoken of by Daniel, &c. who so can understand it, &c.* Surely, these be great abominations, pride, covetousness, Simony, sitting in a solitary place, that is to say, in a dignity void of goodness, of humility, and other virtues; as we do now clearly see in those that are constituted in any office and dignity. O how acceptable a thing should it be, (if time would suffer me), to disclose their wicked acts, which are now apparent, that the faithful servants of God might know them? I trust in God, that he will send after me those that shall be more valiant; and there are alive at this day, that shall make more manifest the malice of Antichrist, and shall give their lives to the death for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall give both to you and me the joys of life everlasting.

This epistle was written upon St John Baptist's day, in prison and in cold irons, I having this meditation with myself, that John was beheaded in his prison and bonds, for the word of God.

*Another*

## Another letter of John Hufs.

**J**ohn Hufs, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful at Boheme, which love the Lord, wisheth to stand and die in the grace of God, and at last to attain unto eternal life.

Ye that bear rule over others and be rich, and ye also that be poor, well-beloved and faithful in God, I beseech you, and admonish you all, that ye will be obedient unto God, make much of his word, and gladly hearing the same, will humbly perform that which ye hear. I beseech you stick fast to the verity of God's word, which I have written and preached unto you out of his law, and the sermons of his saints. Also I desire you, if any man, either in public sermon, or in private talk, heard of me any thing, or have read any thing written by me, which is against the verity of God, that he do not follow the same. Albeit I do not find my conscience guilty that I ever have spoken or written any such thing amongst you.

I desire you moreover, if any man at any time have noted any levity either in my talk or in my conditions, that he do not follow the same; but pray to God for me, to pardon me that sin of lightness. I pray you that ye will love your priests and ministers, which be of honest behaviour, to prefer and honour them before others; namely, such priests as travel in the word of God. I pray you take heed to yourselves, and beware of malicious and deceitful men, and especially of these wicked priests of whom our Saviour doth speak, *that they are under sheeps cloathing, and inwardly are ravening wolves.* I pray such as be rulers and superiors, to behave themselves gently towards their poor inferiors, and to rule them justly. I beseech the citizens that they will walk every man in his degree and vocation with an upright conscience. The artificers also I beseech, that they will exercise their occupations diligently, and use them with the fear of God. I beseech the servants, that they will serve their masters faithfully. And likewise the schoolmasters I beseech, that they living honestly will bring up their scholars virtuously, and teach them faithfully,  
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first to learn to fear God; then, for the glory of God, and the public utility of the commonwealth, and their own health, and not for avarice or for worldly honour, to employ their minds to honest arts. I beseech the students of the university and all schools, in all honest things to obey their masters, and to follow them; and that with all diligence they will study to be profitable both to the setting forth of the glory of God, and to the soul's health, as well of themselves, as of other men. Together I beseech and pray you all, that you will yield most hearty thanks to the right honourable lords, the lord Wenceslaus de Duba, lord John de Clum, lord Henry Lumlovio, lord Vilem Zagecio, lord Nicolas, and other lords of Boheme, of Moravia and Polonie, that their diligence towards me may be grateful to all good men; because that they, like valiant champions of God's truth, have oftentimes set themselves against the whole council for my deliverance, contending and standing against the same to the uttermost of their power; but especially lord Wenceslaus de Duba, and lord John de Clum. Whatsoever they shall report unto you, give credit unto them; for they were in the council when I there answered many. They know who they were of Bohemia, and how many false and slanderous things they brought in against me, and that council cried out against me, and how I also answered to all things whereof I was demanded. I beseech you also, that ye will pray for the king of Romans, and for your king, and for his wife your queen, that God of his mercy would abide with them and with you, both now and henceforth in everlasting life. *Amen.*

This epistle I have written to you out of prison and in bonds, looking the next day after the writing hereof for the sentence of the council upon my death; having a full trust that he will not leave me, neither suffer me to deny his truth, and to revoke the errors, which false witnesses maliciously have devised against me. How mercifully the Lord God hath dealt with me, and was with me in marvellous temptations, ye shall know when as hereafter, by the help of Christ, we shall all meet together in the joy of the world to come. As concerning Mr Jerome, my dearly beloved brother and fellow, I hear no other but that he is remaining



remaining in strait bonds, looking for death as I do; and that for the faith which he valiantly maintained amongst the Bohemians, our cruel enemies of Boheme have given us into the power and hands of other enemies, and into bands. I beseech you pray to God for them.

Moreover, I beseech you, namely, you of Prague, that ye will love the temple of Bethleem, and provide, so long as God shall permit, that the word of God may be preached in the same. For because of that place, the devil is angry, and against the same place he hath stirred up priests and canons, perceiving that in that place his kingdom should be disturbed and diminished. I trust in God that he will keep that holy church so long as it shall please him, and in the same shall give greater increase of his word by others, than he hath done by me a weak vessel. I beseech you also, that ye will love one another, and with-holding no man from the hearing of God's word, ye will provide and take care that good men be not oppressed by any force and violence.

Written at Constance, the year of our Lord 1415.

*Another right godly letter of John Hufs to a certain priest, admonishing him of his office, and exhorting him to be faithful; worthy to be read of all ministers.*

THE peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. My dear brother, be diligent in preaching the gospel, and do the work of a good evangelist; neglect not your vocation; labour like a blessed soldier of Christ. *First*, Live godly and holily. *Secondly*, Teach faithfully and truly. *Thirdly*, Be an example to others in well-doing, that you be not reprehended in your sayings; correct vice, and set forth virtue. To evil-livers threaten eternal punishment; but to those that be faithful and godly, set forth the comforts of eternal joy. Preach continually, but be short and fruitful, prudently understanding, and discreetly dispensing the holy scriptures. Never affirm or maintain those things that be uncertain and doubtful, lest that your adversaries take hold upon you, which rejoyce in depraving their brethren, whereby they may bring the ministers of God into contempt.

Exhort

Exhort men to the confession of their faith, and to the communion of both kinds, both of the body and blood of Christ, whereby such as do repent earnestly of their sins, may the more often come to the holy communion. And I warn you, that you enter into no taverns with guests, and be not a common company-keeper. For the more a preacher keepeth him from the company of men, the more he is regarded. Albeit, deny not your help and diligence, where-soever you may profit others. Against fleshly lust, preach continually all that ever you can; for that is the raging beast which devoureth men, for whom the flesh of Christ did suffer. Wherefore, my heartily beloved, I beseech you to flee fornication; for whereas a man would most profit and do good, there this vice useth most to lurk. In any case flee the company of young women, and believe not their devotion; for St Augustine saith \*, \* St Augustine meaneth not to wantonness, and under the pretence of religion the snare and venom of fornication lurketh. And this know, my well-beloved, that the conversation with them persons. subverteth many, whom the conversation of this world could never blemish nor beguile. Admit no women into your house, for what cause soever it be, and have not much talk with them otherwise, for avoiding of offence. Finally, howsoever you do, fear God and keep his precepts; so shall ye walk wisely, and shall not perish; so shall ye subdue the flesh, condemn the world, and overcome the devil; so shall you put on God, find life, and confirm others, and shall crown yourself with the crown of glory, the which the just Judge shall give you. Amen.

*This letter of John Hufs's containeth a confession of the infirmity of man's flesh, how weak it is, and repugnant against the spirit. Wherein he also exhorteth to persevere constantly in the truth.*

**H**ealth be to you from Jesus Christ, &c. My dear friend, know that Palerz came to me to persuade me that I should

should not fear the shame of abjuration, but to consider the good which thereof will come. To whom I said, That the shame of condemnation and burning is greater than to abjure; and why should I fear then that shame? But I pray you tell me plainly your mind: Presuppose that such articles were laid to you, which you knew yourself not to be true; what would you do in that case? would you abjure? Who answered, The case is fore, and began to weep. Many other things he spake, which I did reprehend. Michael de Causis was sometimes before in the prison with the deputies. And when I was with the deputies, thus I heard him speak unto the keepers, We, by the grace of God, will burn this heretic shortly, for whose cause I have spent many florins. But yet understand that I write not this to the intent to revenge me of him; for that I have committed to God, and pray to God for him with all my heart.

Yet I exhort you again, to be circumspect about our letters. For Michael hath taken such order, that none shall be suffered to come into the prison; no nor yet the keepers wives are permitted to come to me. O holy God, how largely doth Antichrist extend his power and cruelty? but I trust that his power shall be shortened, and his iniquity shall be detected more and more amongst the faithful people.

Almighty God shall confirm the hearts of his faithful, whom he hath chosen before the constitution of the world, that they may receive the eternal crown of glory. And let Antichrist rage as much as he will, yet he shall not prevail against Christ, which shall destroy him with the spirit of his mouth, as the apostle saith; and then shall the creature be delivered out of servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, as saith the apostle in the words following. *We also within ourselves do groan, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body.*

I am greatly comforted in those words of our Saviour, *Happy be you when men shall hate you, and shall separate you, and shall rebuke you, and shall cast out your name as execrable, for the son of man. Rejoice and be glad: for behold, great is your reward in heaven, Luke vi.* O worthy, yea, O most worthy



worthy consolation, which not to understand, but to practise in time of tribulation, is a hard lesson.

This rule St James, with the other apostles, did well understand, which saith, *Count it exceeding joy, my brethren, when ye shall fall into divers temptations, knowing that the probation of your faith worketh patience; let patience have her perfect work.* For certainly it is a great matter for a man to rejoice in trouble, and to take it for joy to be in divers temptations. A light matter it is to speak it and to expound it; but a great matter to fulfil it. For why? our most patient and most valiant Champion himself, knowing that he should arise again the third day, overcoming his enemies by his death, and redeeming from damnation his elect, after his last supper, was troubled in spirit, and said, *My soul is heavy unto death.* Of whom also the gospel saith, that he began to fear, to be sad, and heavy. *Who being then in an agony, was confirmed of the angel, and his sweat was like the drops of blood falling upon the ground.* And yet he notwithstanding, being so troubled, said to his disciples, *Let not your hearts be troubled, neither fear the cruelty of them that persecute you; for you shall have me with you always, that you may overcome the tyranny of your persecutors.* Whereupon those his soldiers, looking upon the Prince and King of glory, sustained great conflicts. They passed through fire and water, and were saved, and received the crown of the Lord God; of the which St James in his canonical epistle, saith, *Blessed is the man that suffereth temptation: for when he shall be proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him.* Of this crown I trust stedfastly the Lord will make me partaker also with you, which be the fervent sealers of the truth, and with all them which stedfastly and constantly do love the Lord Jesus Christ, which suffered for us, leaving to us example that we should follow his steps. It behoved him to suffer, as he saith; and us also it behoved to suffer, that the members may suffer together with the Head. For he saith, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

O most merciful Christ, draw us weak creatures after thee; for except thou shouldst draw us, we are not able to

follow thee. Give us a strong spirit, that it may be ready; and although the flesh be feeble, yet let thy grace go before us, go with us, and follow us; for without thee we can do nothing, and much less enter into the cruel death for thy sake. Give us that prompt and ready spirit, a bold heart, an upright faith, a firm hope, and perfect charity, that we may give our lives patiently and joyfully for thy name's sake. *Amen.*

Written in prison and in bonds in the vigil of holy St John the Baptist, who, being in prison and in bonds for the rebuking of wickedness, was beheaded.

Among divers other letters of John Hufs, which he wrote to the great consolation of others, I thought also here to intermix another certain godly letter written out of England, by a faithful scholar of Wickliff, as appeareth, unto John Hufs and the Bohemians, which for the zealous affection therein contained, seemeth not unworthy to be read.

*A letter to John Hufs, and to the Bohemians, from London.*

**G**reeting, and whatsoever can be devised more sweet, in the bowels of Christ Jesus. My dearly beloved in the Lord, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have the knowledge of the truth; which abideth in you, and shall be with you through the grace of God for evermore. I rejoiced above measure, when our beloved brethren came and gave testimony unto us of your truth, and how you walked in the truth. I have heard brethren how sharply Antichrist persecuteth you, in vexing the faithful servants of Christ with divers and strange kinds of afflictions. And surely no marvel, if amongst you (since it is so almost all the world over) the law of Christ be too too grievously impugned, and that red dragon having so many heads, (of whom it is spoken in the Apocalyps), have now vomited out of his mouth that great flood, by which he goeth about to swallow up the woman; but the  
most

most gracious God will deliver for ever his only and most faithful spouse. Let us therefore comfort ourselves in the Lord our God, and in his unmeasurable goodness, hoping strongly in him, which will not suffer those that love him to be unmercifully defrauded of any their purpose, if we, according to our duty, shall love him with all our heart; for adversity should by no means prevail over us, if there were no iniquity reigning in us. Let therefore no tribulation or sorrow for Christ's cause discourage us, knowing this for a surety, that whomsoever the Lord vouchsafeth to receive to be his children, those he scourgeth; for so the merciful Father will have them tried in this miserable life by persecutions, that afterwards he may spare them. For the gold that this high Artificer hath chosen, he purgeth and trieth in this fire, that he may afterwards lay it up in his pure treasury. For we see that the time we shall abide here is short and transitory; the life which we hope for after this is blessed and everlasting. Therefore whilst we have time, let us take pain, that we may enter into that rest. What other thing do we see in this brittle life, than sorrow, heaviness, and sadness; and that which is most grievous of all to the faithful, too much abusing and contempt of the law of the Lord? Let us therefore endeavour ourselves, as much as we may, to lay hold of the things that are eternal and abiding, despising in our minds all transitory and frail things. Let us consider the holy fellowship of our fathers that have gone before us. Let us consider the saints of the Old and New Testament. Did they not pass through this sea of tribulation and persecution? *Were not some of them cut in pieces, other some stoned, and others of them killed with the sword? some others of them went about in pelts and goats skins, as the apostle to the Hebrews witnesseth.* Surely they all walked straightways, following the steps of Christ, which said, *He that ministereth unto me, let him follow me wheresoever I go, &c.* Therefore let us also, which have so noble examples given us of the saints that went before us, laying away, as much as in us lieth, *the heavy burden and the yoke of sin which compasseth us about, run forward through patience, to the battle that is set before us, fixing our eyes upon the author of faith, and Jesus the finisher of the same;*  
*who,*



*who, seeing the joy that was set before him, suffered the pains of the cross, despising death.* Let us call upon him, which suffered such reproach against himself of sinners, that we be not wearied, fainting in our hearts, but that we may heartily pray for help of the Lord, and may fight against his adversary Antichrist; that we may love his law, and not be deceitful labourers, but that we may deal faithfully in all things, according to that which God hath vouchsafed to give us; and that we may labour diligently in the Lord's cause, under hope of an everlasting reward. Behold therefore, brother Hus, most dearly beloved in Christ, although in face unknown to me, yet not in faith and love, (for distance of places cannot separate those whom the love of Christ doth effectually knit together), be comforted in the grace which is given unto thee, labour like a good soldier of Christ Jesus, preach, be instant in word and in example, and call as many as thou canst to the way of truth; for the truth of the gospel is not to be kept in silence, because of the frivolous censures and thunderbolts of Antichrist. And therefore, to the uttermost of thy power, strengthen thou and confirm the members of Christ, which are weakened by the devil; and, if the Lord will vouchsafe it, Antichrist shall shortly come to an end. And there is one thing wherein I do greatly rejoice, that in your realm, and in other places, God hath stirred up the hearts of some men, that they can gladly suffer for the word of God imprisonment, banishment, and death.

Further, beloved, I know not what to write unto you, but I confess, that I could wish to pour out my whole heart, if thereby I might comfort you in the law of the Lord. Also I salute from the bottom of my heart all the faithful lovers of the law of the Lord, and specially Jacobellus, your coadjutor in the gospel, requiring that he will pray unto the Lord for me in the universal church of Jesus Christ. *And the God of peace which hath raised from the dead the Shepherd of the sheep, the mighty Lord Jesus Christ, make you apt in all goodness, to do his will, working in you that which may be pleasant in his sight.* All your friends salute you which have heard of your constancy. I would  
desire

desire also to see your letters written back to us, for know ye that they shall greatly comfort us.

At London by your servant, desiring to be fellow with you in your labours, Ricus Wichewitze, priest unworthy.

*Another letter of John Hus to his friends of Boheme.*

**T**HE Lord God be with you. I love the counsel of the Lord above gold and precious stone. Wherefore I trust in the mercy of Jesus Christ, that he will give me his Spirit to stand in his truth. Pray to the Lord; *for the spirit is ready, and the flesh is weak.* The Lord Almighty be the eternal reward unto my lords, which constantly, firmly, and faithfully do stand for righteousness; to whom the Lord God shall give in the kingdom of Boheme, to know the truth. For the following of which truth, necessary it is that they return again into Boheme, setting apart all vain-glory, and following not a mortal and miserable king, but the King of glory, which giveth eternal life.

O how comfortable was the giving of the hand of lord John de Clum unto me, which was not ashamed to reach forth his hand to me a wretch, and such an abject heretic, lying in fetters of iron, and cried out upon all men! Now peradventure I shall not speak much hereafter with you: Therefore salute in time as you shall see them all the faithful of Boheme.

Paletz came to me into prison. His salutation in my vehement infirmity was this before the commissaries, that there hath not risen a more perilous heretic since Christ was born, than was Wickliff and I. Also he said, that all such as came to hear my talk were infected with this heresy, to think that the substance of bread remained in the sacrament of the altar. To whom I answered and said, O master, what a grievous salutation have you given me, and how greatly do you sin? Behold, I shall die, or peradventure to-morrow shall be burnt; and what reward shall be recompensed to you in Boheme for your labour?

This thing peradventure I should not have written, lest

I might seem to hate him. I have always had this in my heart, *Trust not in princes, &c.* And again, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh to be his arm.* For God's sake be you circumspect how you stand, and how you return. Carry no letters with you. Direct your books not all by one, but diversly by divers friends.

Know this for certain, that I have had great conflicts by dreams, in such sort as I had much ado to refrain from crying out. For I dreamed of the pope's escape before he went. And after the lord John had told me thereof, immediately in the night it was told me, that the pope should return to you again. And afterward also I dreamed of the apprehending of Mr Jerome, although not in full manner as it was done. All the prisonments, whether and how I am carried, were opened to me before, although not fully after the same form and circumstance. Many serpents oftentimes appeared unto me, having heads also in their tail, but none of them could bite me; and many other things more.

These things I write, not esteeming myself as a prophet, or that I extol myself, but only to signify unto you what temptations I had in body, and also in mind, and what great fear I had, lest I should transgress the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I remember with myself the words of Mr Jerome, which said, that if I should come to the council, he thought I should never return home again. In like manner there was a good and godly man, a tailor, which taking his leave of me at Prague, spake to me in these words: God be with you, (said he), for I think verily, my dear and good Mr John, that you shall not return again to us with your life. The King, not of Hungary, but of heaven, reward you with all goodness, for the faithful doctrine which I at your hands have received, &c.

And shortly after the writing hereof, he sendeth also unto them another propheticall vision of his to be expounded touching the reformation of the church, written in his forty-fourth epistle; the contents whereof be these.

Another



*Another letter of John Hufs, sent to the lord John de Clum.*

I Pray you expound to me the dream of this night. I saw how that in my church of Bethleem they came to raze and put out all the images of Christ, and did put them out. The next day after I arose and saw many painters, which painted and made more fairer images, and many more than I had done before; which images I was very glad and joyful to behold. And the painters with much people about them, said, Let the bishops and priests come now, and put us out these pictures. Which being done, much people seemed to me in Bethleem to rejoyce, and I with them. And I awaking therewith felt myself to laugh, &c.

This vision lord John de Clum, and John Hufs himself, in his book of epistles in the forty-fifth epistle, seemeth to expound, and applieth the images of Christ unto the preaching of Christ and of his life. The which preaching and doctrine of Christ, though the pope and his cardinals should extinguish in him, yet did he foresee and declare, that the time should come, wherein the same doctrine should be revived again by others, so plenteously, that the pope with all his power should not be able to prevail against it. Thus much as concerning this vision of John Hufs. Whereunto doth well accord the prophecy of Jerome of Prague, printed in the coin called *Moneta Hussi*; of the which coin I have myself one of the plates, having this superscription following printed about it, *Centum revolutis annis Deo respondebitis & mihi*; that is, After an hundred years come and gone, you shall give account to God and to me. Whereof (God willing) more shall be said hereafter.

Furthermore, in the forty-eighth epistle the said John Hufs seeming to speak with the like spirit of prophecy, hath these words following, *Sed spero, quod que dixi sub tecto, prædicabuntur super tecta*; that is, But trust that those things which I have spoken within the house, hereafter shall be preached upon the top of the house.

And because we are here in hand with the prophecies of

John Hufs, it shall serve well in place, here moreover to record his words in a certain treatise by him written, *De sacerdotum & monachorum carnalium abominatione*; wherein the said John Hufs, speaking prophetically of the reformation of the church, hath these words following, *Ex istis ulterius adverte incidentaliter, quod Dei ecclesia nequit ad pristinam suam dignitatem reduci, &c.*

That is in English.

“Moreover, hereupon note and mark by the way, that the church of God cannot be reduced to his former dignity, or be reformed, before all things first be made new; the truth whereof is plain by the temple of Solomon. Like as the clergy and priests, so also the people and laity; or else unless all such as now be addict to avarice, from the least to the most, be first converted and reclaimed, as well the people as clergy and priests. Albeit as my mind now giveth me, I believe rather the first, that is, that then shall rise a new people, formed after the new man, which is created after God. Of the which people new clerks and priests shall come, and be taken; which all shall hate covetousness, and glory of this life, hastening to an heavenly conversation. Notwithstanding all these things shall come to pass, and be brought by little and little in order of times, dispensed of God for the same purpose. And this God doth and will do for his own goodness and mercy, and for the riches of his great longanimity and patience, giving time and space of repentance to them, that have long lain in their sins, to amend and flee from the face of the Lord's fury, while that in like manner the carnal people, and carnal priests successively and in time shall fall away and be consumed as with the moth,” &c.

*Another letter of John Hufs.*

**M**After Martin, my dear brother in Christ, I exhort you in the Lord, that you fear God, keep his commandments, and flee the company of women, and beware of hearing their confession, lest by the hypocrisy of women, Satan deceive you; trust not their devotion. You know how

how I have detested the avarice and the inordinate life of the clergy: wherefore through the grace of God I suffer now persecution, which shortly shall be consummate in me; neither do I fear to have my heart poured out for the name of Christ Jesus. I desire you heartily be not greedy in seeking after benefices. And yet if you shall be called to any cure in the country, let the honour of God, the salvation of souls, and the travel thereof move you thereunto, and not the having of the living, or the commodities thereof. And if you shall be placed in any such benefice, beware you have no young woman for your cook or servant, lest you edify and increase more your house than your soul. See that you be a builder of your spiritual house, being gentle to the poor, and humble of mind, and waste not your goods in great fare. I fear also, if you do not amend your life, ceasing from your costly and superfluous apparel, lest you shall be grievously chastised, as I also wretched man shall be punished, which have used the like, being seduced by custom of evil men and worldly glory, whereby I have been wounded against God with the spirit of pride. And because you have notably known both my preaching and outward conversation even from my youth, I have no need to write many things unto you, but to desire you, for the mercy of Jesus Christ, that you do not follow me in any such levity and lightness, which you have seen in me. You knew how before my priesthood (which grieveth me now) I have delighted to play oftentimes at chess, and have neglected my time, and have unhappily provoked both myself and others to anger many times by that play. Wherefore, besides other my innumerable faults, for this also I desire you to invoke the mercy of the Lord, that he will pardon me, and so direct my life, that having overcome the wickedness of this present life, the flesh, the world, and the devil, I may find place in the heavenly country, at the least in the day of judgment. Fare ye well in Christ Jesus, with all of them which keep his law. My grey coat, if you will, keep to yourself for my remembrance; but I think you are ashamed to wear that grey colour, therefore you may give it to whom you shall think good. My white coat you shall give the minister N. my scholar. To George, or else to Zu-



zikon sixty groats, or else my grey coat, for he hath faithfully served me.

*The superscription.*

I pray you that you do not open this letter, before you be sure and certain of my death.

*The consolation of Mr Jerome to Mr Hufs.*

**M**Y master, in those things which you have both written hitherto, and also preached after the law of God, against the pride, avarice, and other inordinate vices of the priests, go forward, be constant and strong. And if I shall know that you are oppressed in the cause, and if need shall so require, of mine own accord I will follow after to help you as much as I can.

**B**Y the life, acts, and letters of John Hufs hitherto rehearsed, it is evident and plain, that he was condemned not for any error of doctrine, which they could well prove in him, who neither denied their Popish transubstantiation, neither spake against the authority of the church of Rome, if it were well governed, nor yet the seven sacraments, and also said mass himself, and almost in all their Popish opinions was a Papist with them; but only of evil-will was accused of his malicious adversaries, because he spake against the pomp, pride, and avarice, and other wicked enormities of the pope, cardinals, and prelates of the church, and because he could not abide the high dignities and livings of the church, and thought the doings of the pope to be Antichrist-like. For this cause he procured so many enemies and false witnesses against him. Who straining and picking matter out of his books and writings, having no one just article of doctrine to lay unto him, yet they made him an heretic, whether he would or no, and brought him to his condemnation. This can hatred and malice do, where the charity of Christ hath no place. Which being so, as thy charity (good reader) may easily understand, in perusing the whole course of his story; I beseech thee then, what

what cause had John Cochleus to write his twelve books against John Hufs and Hussites. In which books how bitterly and intemperately he misuseth his pen, by these few words in his second book, thou mayst take a little taste; which words I thought here briefly to place in English, to the end that all Englishmen may judge thereby, with what spirit and truth these Catholics be carried. His words be these, *lib. 2. hist. Dico igitur Joan. Hufs neque sanctum neque beatum habendum esse, sed impium potius, &c.* That is, "I say therefore John Hufs is neither to be counted holy nor blessed, but rather wicked and eternally wretched; insomuch that in the day of judgment, it shall be more easy, not only with the infidel Pagans, Turks, Tartarians, and Jews, but also with the most sinful Sodomites, and the abominable Persians, which most filthily do lie with their daughters, sisters, or mothers, yea, and also with most impious Cain, killer of his own brother, with Thiestes, killer of his own mother, and the Lestrygones and other Anthropophagi, which devour man's flesh; yea, more easy with those infamous murderers of infants, Pharaoh and Herod, than with him," &c. These be the words of Cochleus. Whose railing books, although they deserve neither to be read nor answered, yet if it please God, it were to be wished, that the Lord would stir up some towardsly young man, that hath so much leisure, to defend the simplicity of this John Hufs, which cannot now answer for himself. In the mean time, something to satisfy or stay the reader's mind against this immoderate hyperbole of Cochleus, in like few words I will bring out John Hufs to speak and to clear himself against this slander; whose words in his book *De sacerdotum & monachorum abominatione desolationis*, p. 84. &c. I beseech the reader to note. *Nam & ista scribens fateor, quod nihil aliud me in illis perurget, nisi dilectio Dom. nostri Iesu crucifixi, &c.* That is, "For in writing these things, I confess nothing else to have moved me hereunto, but only the love of our Lord Jesus crucified, whose prints and stripes (according to the measure of my weakness and vileness) I covet to bear in myself, beseeching him so to give me grace, that I never seek to glory in myself, or in any thing else, but only in his cross, and in the in-estimable

estimable ignominy of his passion which he suffered for me. And therefore I write and speak these things, which I do not doubt will like all such as unfeignedly do love the Lord Christ crucified; and contrary will mislike not a little all such as be of Antichrist. Also again, I confess before the most merciful Lord Jesus Christ crucified, that these things which I do now write, and those that I have written before, neither I could have written, nor knew how, nor durst so have written, unless he, by his inward unction, had so commanded me. Neither yet do I write these things as of authority, to get me fame and name. For as St Augustine and Hierome do say, that is only to be given to the scriptures and writings of the apostles, evangelists, and prophets, and to the canonical scriptures, which do abound in the fulness of the Spirit of Jesus. And whatsoever is there said, is full of verity and wholesome utility," &c. And here place also would require something to say to Æneas Sylvius, to Antoninus, and to Laziardus, which falsely impute articles to him, which he never maintained. But because time suffereth not, I will proceed to the story of Mr Jerome of Prague.

The tragical and lamentable history of the famous learned man, and godly martyr of Christ, Mr Jerome of Prague, burned at Constance for the like cause and quarrel as Mr John Hufs was, 1416.

THESE things hitherto being discoursed, touching the life, acts, and constant martyrdom of Mr John Hufs, with part also of his letters adjoined to the same, whose death was on the 6th of July, anno 1416, now remaineth consequently to describe the like tragedy and cruel handling of his Christian companion and fellow in bands Mr Jerome of Prague, who grievously sorrowing the slanderous reproach and defamation of his country of Boheme, and



and also hearing tell of the manifest injuries done unto that man of worthy memory Mr John Hufs; freely and of his own accord came unto Constance the 4th day of April, anno 1415; who there perceiving that John Hufs was denied to be heard, and that watch and wait was laid for him on every side, he departed to Iberling a city of the empire, until the next day; the which city was a mile off from Constance; and from thence he wrote his letters by me unto Sigismund king of Hungary, and his barons, and also unto the council, most earnestly requiring that the king and the council would give him a safe-conduct freely to come and go, and that he would then come in open audience to answer unto every man, if there were any of the council that would lay any crime unto him, as by the tenor of his intimation shall more at large appear.

When as the said king of Hungary was required thereunto, as is aforesaid, being in the house of the lord cardinal of Cambray, he denied to give Mr Jerome any safe-conduct, excusing himself for the evil speed he had with the safe-conduct of John Hufs before, and alledging also certain other causes. The deputies also of the four nations of the council being moved thereunto by the lords of the kingdom of Boheme, answered, We (say they) will give him a safe-conduct to come, but not to depart. Whose answers, when they were reported unto Mr Jerome, he the next day after wrote certain intimations, according to the tenor here under-written, which he sent unto Constance to be set upon the gates of the city, and upon the gates of the churches and monasteries, and of the houses of the cardinals, and other nobles and prelates. The tenor whereof here followeth word for word in this manner.

**U**Nto the most noble prince and lord, the lord Sigismund, by the grace of God king of the Romans, always Augustus, and of Hungary, &c. I Jerome of Prague, master of art of the general universities of Paris, Cullen, Heidelberg, and Prague, by these my present letters do notify unto the king, together with the whole reverend council, and as much as in me lieth, do all men to understand and know, that because of the crafty slanderers, backbiters, and  
accusers,

accusers, I am ready freely, and of mine own will, to come unto Constance, there to declare openly before the council the purity and sincerity of my true faith and mine innocency, and not secretly in corners before any private or particular person. Wherefore if there be any of my slanderers, of what nation or estate soever they be, which will object against me any crime of error or heresy; let them come forth openly before me in the presence of the whole council, and in their own names object against me, and I will be ready, as I have written, to answer openly and publicly before the whole council, of mine innocency, and to declare the purity and sincerity of my true faith. And if so be that I shall be found culpable in error or heresy, then I will not refuse openly to suffer such punishment as shall be meet and worthy for an erroneous person, or an heretic.

Wherefore I most humbly beseech my lord the king, and the whole sacred council, that I may have to this end and purpose aforesaid, safe and sure access. And if it happen that I offering such equity and right as I do, before any fault be proved against me, be arrested, imprisoned, or have any violence done unto me; that then it may be manifest unto the whole world, that this general council doth not proceed according to equity and justice, if they would by any means put me back from this profound and strait justice, being come hither freely of mine own mind and accord. The which thing I suppose to be far from so sacred and holy council of wise men.

**W**Hen as yet he through such intimations, copied out in the Bohemian, Latin, and German tongue, being set up as is aforesaid, could not get any safe-conduct, then the nobles, lords, and knights specially of the Bohemian nation, present in Constance, gave unto Mr Jerome their letters-patents, confirmed with their seals for a testimony and witness of the premisses. With the which letters the said Mr Jerome returned again unto Boheme; but by the treason and conspiracy of his enemies he was taken in Hirshaw by the officers of duke John, and in Zultzbach was brought back again to the presence of the duke. In the mean

mean time such as were the setters forward of the council against Mr John Hufs, and Mr Jerome, that is to say, Michael de Causis, and Mr Paletz, and other their accomplices, required that the said Mr Jerome should be cited by reason of his intimations, and certain days after the citation here under-written was set upon the gates and porches of the city, and churches, which followeth here in this manner.

**T**His most sacred and holy synod and general council of Constance, faithfully congregated and gathered together in the Holy Ghost, representing the universal militant church, unto Jerome of Prague, which writeth himself to be a master of art of so many universities, and pretendeth those things which are only pertaining unto sobriety and modesty, and that he knoweth no more than he ought, &c. : know thou that there is a certain writing come unto our understanding and knowledge, the which was set up as it were by thine own person upon the gates of the churches and city of Constance, upon the Sunday, when there was sung in the church of God, *Quasi modo geniti*; wherein thou dost affirm, that thou wilt openly answer unto thy accusers and slanderers which shall object any crime, error, or heresy against thee, whereof thou art marvelously infamed and accused before us, and specially touching the doctrine of Wickliff, and other doctrines contrary unto the catholic faith, so that thou mightst have granted unto thee a safe-conduct to come. But for so much as it is our part principally and chiefly to foresee and look unto these crafty foxes which go about to destroy the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, therefore we do cite and call forth, by the tenor of these presents, thy person manifoldly defamed and suspected for the temerarious affirming and teaching of manifold errors; so that within the term of fifteen days, to be accounted from the date of these presents, whereof five days are appointed for the first term, five for the second, and other five for the third, we do ordain and appoint, by canonical admonition and warning, that thou do appear in the public session of the sacred council, if there be any holden the same day, or else the first day im-



mediately following, when as any session shall be, according to the tenor of thy said writing, to answer to those things, which any person or persons shall object or lay against thee in any cause of thy faith, and to receive and have as justice shall require. Whereupon, so much as in us lieth, and as catholic faith shall require, we offer and assign to thee, by the tenor hereof, our safe-conduct from all violence, (justice always being saved); certifying thee, that whether thou dost appear or not, the said term or time appointed, notwithstanding, process shall go forward against thee by the said sacred council, or by their commissary or commissaries, for the time aforesaid not observed and kept, thy contumacy or stubbornness in any thing notwithstanding.

Given in the sixth session of the general council, the 17th day of April, under the seal of the presidents of the four nations.

*Grumpert Faber Notary of the Germans.*

**A**fter that Sigismund king of Hungary, with the rest of the council, understood by the foresaid duke John, that Mr Jerome was taken, they were earnestly in hand, requiring that Mr Jerome should be brought before them unto the council. The which duke John, after he had received letters of the king and the council, brought Mr Jerome bound unto Constance, whom his brother duke Ludovicus led through the city to the cloister of the friers minors in Constance, whereas the chief priests and elders of the people, scribes and Pharisees, where gathered together, attending and waiting for his coming. He the said Mr Jerome carried a great handbolt of iron with a long chain in his hand, and as he passed, the chain made a great rattling and noise; and for the more confusion and despite towards him, they led him by the same chain after duke Ludovicus aforesaid, holding and stretching out the same a great way from him, with the which chain they also kept him bound in the cloister. When he was brought into the cloister, they read before him the letter of duke John, which was sent with the said Mr Jerome unto the council, containing in effect, how

how that the said duke John had sent Mr Jerome unto the council, who by chance was fallen into his hands, because he heard an evil report of him, that he was suspected of the heresies of Wickliff; that the council might take order for him, whose part it was to correct and punish such as did err and stray from the truth; besides many other flattering tales which were written in the said letter for the praise of the council. After this they read the citation which was given out by the council against Mr Jerome, whereof we have spoken before. Then certain of the bishops said unto him, Jerome, why didst thou flee and run away, and didst not appear when thou wast cited? He answered, Because I could not have any safe-conduct, neither from you, neither from the king, as it appeareth by these letters-patents of the barons, which you have, neither by mine open intimations could I obtain any safe-conduct.

Wherefore I, perceiving many of my grievous and heavy friends to be here present in the council, would not myself be the occasion of my perils and dangers; but if I had known, or had any understanding of this citation, without all doubt, albeit I had been in Boheme, I would have returned again. Then all the whole rabble rising up, alledged divers and sundry accusations and testimonies against him with a great noise and tumult. When the rest held their peace, then spake Mr Gerson the chancellor of Paris; Jerome, when thou wast at Paris, thou thoughtst thyself, by means of thy eloquence, to be an angel, and didst trouble the whole university, alledging openly in the schools many erroneous conclusions with their *corolaria*, and especially in the question *de universalibus & de ideis*, with many other very offensive questions. Unto whom Mr Jerome said, I answer to you, Mr Gerson; those matters which I did put forth there in the schools at Paris, in the which also I answered to the arguments of the masters, I did put them forth philosophically, and as a philosopher, and master of the university; and if I have put forth any questions which I ought not to have put forth, teach me that they be erroneous, and I will most humbly be informed, and amend the same.

Whiles he was yet speaking, another, as I suppose, the

master of the university of Cullen upon the river of Rheine, rising up, said, When thou wast also at Cullen, in thy position which thou didst there determine, thou didst propound many erroneous matters. Then said Mr Jerome unto him, Shew me first one error which I propounded. Wherewithal he being in a manner astonished, said, I do not remember them now at the first, but hereafter they shall be objected against you.

And by and by the third man rising up, said, When that you were also at Heidelberg, you propounded many erroneous matters as touching the Trinity, and there painted out a certain shield or scutcheon, comparing the Trinity of persons in divinity unto water, snow, and ice, and such like. Unto whom Mr Jerome answered, Those things that I wrote or painted there, the same will I also speak, write, and paint here; and teach me that they be erroneous, and I will most humbly revoke and recant the same.

Then certain cried out, Let him be burned, let him be burned. Unto whom he answered, If my death do delight or please you, in the name of God let it be so.

Then said the archbishop of Salisburg, Not so, Mr Jerome, for so much as it is written, *I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he convert and live.* When these and many other tumults and cries were passed, whereby they did then most disorderly and outrageously witness against him, they delivered the said Mr Jerome, being bound, unto the officers of the city of Constance, to be carried to prison for that night; and so every one of them returned to their lodgings.

In the mean time, one of the friends of Mr John Hufs, looking out at a window of the cloister, said unto him, Mr Jerome. Then said he, You are welcome, my dear brother. Then said Peter unto him, Be constant, and fear not to suffer death for the truth's sake, of the which, when you were in times past at liberty, you did preach so much goodness. Unto whom Jerome answered, Truly, brother, I do not fear death, and for so much as we know that we have spoken much thereof in times past, let us now see what may be known or done in effect. By and by his keepers  
coming



coming to the window, threatening him with strokes, did put away the said Peter from the window of the cloister.

Then came there one Vitus unto Mr Jerome, and said, Master, how do you? Unto whom he answered, Truly, brother, I do very well. Then his keepers coming about him, laid hold of the said Vitus, saying, This is also one of the number, and kept him. When it drew towards evening, the archbishop of Rigen sent certain of his servants, which led away Mr Jerome, being strongly bound with chains, both by the hands and by the neck, and kept him so for certain hours. When night drew on, they carried him unto a certain tower of the city in St Paul's churchyard, where they tying him fast unto a great block, and his feet in the stocks, his hands also being made fast upon them, they left him; whereas the block was so high, that he could by no means sit thereupon, but that his head must hang downward. They carried also the said Vitus unto the archbishop of Rigen, who demanded of him, why he durst be so bold to talk with such a man, being a reprobate of all men, and an heretic? and when as he could find no cause of imprisonment in him, and that he said he was Mr John de Clum's friend, (taking an oath and promise of him, that he should not go about to endamage the council by reason of that imprisonment and captivity), so dismissed him and sent him away.

Mr Jerome, unknown unto us whither he was carried, lay in the said tower two days and two nights, relieved only with bread and water. Then one of his keepers, coming unto Mr Peter, declared unto him how that Mr Jerome lay hard by in bonds and chains, and how he was fed. Then Mr Peter desired that he might have leave given him to give him meat, because he would procure the same unto him. The keeper of the prison, granting his request, carried meat unto him. Within eleven days after, so hanging by the heels, he used so small repast, that he fell sore sick even unto the death. When as he living then in that captivity and prison desired to have a confessor, they of the council denied that he should have any, until such time as by great importunity he obtained to have one; his friends being then there present in the  
same

same prison and tower, wherein he then lay by the space of one year lacking but seven days.

After they had put John Hufs to death, then about the feast of the nativity of Mary the virgin they brought forth Mr Jerome, whom they had kept so long in chains, unto the church of St Paul: and threatening him with death, being instant upon him, they forced him to abjure and recant, and consent unto the death of Mr John Hufs, that he was justly and truly condemned and put to death by them. He, what for fear of death, and hoping thereby to escape out of their hands, according to their will and pleasure, and according to the tenor which was exhibited unto him, did make abjuration, and that in the cathedral church and open session, the draught whereof penned to him by the Papists, here ensueth.

*The abjuration of Mr Jerome of Prague.*

**I** Jerome of Prague, master of art, acknowledging the catholic church, and the apostolic faith, do accurse and renounce all heresies, and specially that whereof I have hitherto been infamed; and that which in times past John Hufs and John Wickliff have holden and taught in their works, treatises, and sermons, made unto the people and clergy: for the which cause the said Wickliff and Hufs, together with the said doctrines and errors, are condemned by this synod of Constance as heretics, and all the said doctrine sententially condemned, and especially in certain articles expressed in the sentences and judgments given against them by this sacred council.

Also I do accord and agree unto the holy church of Rome, the apostolic seat in this sacred council, and with my mouth and heart do profess in all things, and touching all things, and specially as touching the keys, sacraments, orders, and offices, and ecclesiastical censures, of pardons, reliques of saints, ecclesiastical liberty, also ceremonies, and all other things pertaining unto Christian religion, as the church of Rome, the apostolic see, and this sacred council do profess: and specially that many of the said articles are notoriously

tionously heretical, and lately reprov'd by the holy fathers, some of them blasphemous, other some erroneous; some offensive unto godly ears, and many of them temerarious and seditious. And such also were counted the articles lately condemned by the sacred council, and it was inhibited and forbidden to all and singular catholic men hereafter to preach, teach, or presume to hold or maintain any of the said articles, under pain of being accursed.

And I the said Jerome, for so much as I have laboured by scholastical arts to perswade the opinion, *De universalibus realibus*, and that one substance of the common kind should signify many things subject under the same, and every one of them, as St Ambrose, Hierome, Augustine, do affirm, and likewise others; for the teaching hereof by a plain example I described as it were a certain triangle, form, or figure, the which I called the shield of faith.

Therefore utterly to exclude and take away the erroneous and wicked understanding thereof, the which peradventure some men may gather thereby, I do say, affirm, and declare, that I never made the said figure, neither named it the shield of faith to that intent or purpose, that I would extol or prefer the opinion of universalities above or before the contrary opinion, in such sort, as though that were the shield of faith, and that without the affirmation thereof the catholic faith could not be defended or maintained, when as I myself would not obstinately stick thereunto. But this I said, because I had put example in the description of the triangle or form, that one divine essence consisted in three subjects or persons in themselves distinct, that is to say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The article of the which Trinity, is the chief shield of faith, and foundation of the catholic truth.

Furthermore, that it may be evident unto all men what the causes were for the which I was reputed and thought to stick to, and favour sometime John Hufs; I signify unto all men by these presents, that when as I heard him oftentimes, both in his sermons, and also in the schools, I believed that he was a very good man, neither that he did in any point gainsay the traditions of our holy mother the church, or holy doctors; insomuch as when I was lately



in this city, and the articles which I affirmed were shewed unto me, which were also condemned by the sacred council, at the first sight of them I did not believe that they were his; at the least not in that form. But when as I had further understood, by certain famous doctors and masters of divinity, that they were his articles, I required for my further information and satisfaction to have the books of his own handwriting shewed unto me, wherein it was said those articles were contained; the which books, when they were shewed unto me written with his own hand, which I did know as well as mine own, I found all, and every one of those articles therein written in like form as they are condemned. Wherefore I do worthily judge and think him and his doctrine, with his adherents, to be condemned and reprov'd by the sacred council, as heretical and without reason. All which the premisses with a pure mind and conscience, I do here pronounce and speak, being now fully and sufficiently informed of the foresaid sentences and judgments given by the sacred council against the doctrines of the said John Wickliff and John Hufs, and against their own persons; unto the which judgment as a devout catholic in all things, I do most humbly consent and agree.

Also I the foresaid Jerome, which before the reverend fathers the lords cardinals, and reverend lords, prelates, and doctors, and other worshipful persons of this sacred council in this same place, did heretofore freely and willingly declare and expound mine intent and purpose, amongst other things speaking of the church, did divide the same into three parts; and as I did perceive afterward, it was understood by some that I would affirm, that in the triumphant church there was faith. Whereas I do firmly believe, that there is the blessed sight and beholding of God, excluding all dark understanding and knowledge. And now also I do say, affirm, and declare, that it was never my intent and purpose, to prove that there should be faith, speaking of faith, as faith is commonly defined, but knowledge far exceeding faith. And generally whatsoever I said, either there, or at any time before, I do refer, and most humbly submit myself unto the determination of this sacred council of Constance.

Moreover,

Moreover, I do swear, both by the holy Trinity, and also by the most holy gospel, that I will for evermore remain and persevere, without all doubt, in the truth of the catholic church. And all such as by their doctrine and teaching shall impugn this faith, I judge them worthy, together with their doctrines, of eternal curse. And if I myself at any time (which God forbid I should) do presume to preach or teach contrary thereunto, I will submit myself unto the severity of the canons, and be bound unto eternal pain and punishment. Whereupon I do deliver up this my confession and tenor of my profession willingly before this sacred general council, and have subscribed and written all these things with mine own hand.

**A**fter all this they caused him to be carried again unto the same prison, but not so straitly chained and bound as he was before; notwithstanding kept every day with soldiers and armed men. And when as afterward, his enemies which were appointed against him, as Michael de Causis, and wicked Paletz, with other their companions in these affairs, understood and knew by the words and talk of Mr Jerome, and by other certain tokens, that he made the same abjuration and recantation, not of a sincere and pure mind, but only to the intent thereby to escape their hands, they, together with certain friers of Prague, of the order of Carmelites, then coming in, put up new accusations against the said Mr Jerome, and drew the same into articles, being very instant and earnest that he should answer thereunto. And for so much as his judges, and certain cardinals, as the cardinal of Cambray, the cardinal de Ursinis, the cardinal of Aquilegia, and of Florence, considering the malice of the enemies of Mr Jerome, did see the great injury that was done unto him, they laboured before the whole council for his delivery.

It happened upon a certain day, as they were labouring in the council for the delivery of the said Mr Jerome, that the Germans and Bohemians his enemies with all force and power resisted against it, crying out that he should in no case be dismissed. Then starts up one called Dr Naso, which said unto the cardinals, We marvel much of you,

most reverend fathers, that your reverences will make intercession for such a wicked heretic, for whose sake we in Boheme, with the whole clergy, have suffered much trouble and mischief, and peradventure your fatherhoods shall suffer; and I greatly fear, lest that you have received some rewards, either of the king of Boheme, or of these heretics. When as the cardinals were thus rebuked, they discharged themselves of Mr Jerome's cause and matter.

Then his enemies aforesaid obtained to have other judges appointed; as the patriarch of Constantinople, and a German doctor, for so much as they did know that the patriarch was a grievous enemy unto Mr Jerome, because he, being before appointed judge by the council, had condemned John Hufs unto death.

But Mr Jerome would not answer them in prison, requiring to have open audience, because he would there finally declare unto them his mind, neither would he by any means consent unto those private judges. Whereupon the presidents of the council, thinking that the said Mr Jerome would renew his recantation before the said audience, and confirm the same, did grant him open audience.

In the year of our Lord 1416, the 25th day of May, which was the Saturday before the ascension of our Lord, the said Mr Jerome was brought unto open audience before the whole council, to the great cathedral church of Constance, where, by the commissioners of the council, in the behalf of his foresaid enemies, there were laid against him of new a hundred and seven articles, to the intent that he should not escape the snare of death, which they provided and laid for him; insomuch, as the judges had before declared, that, by the saying of the witnesses, it was already concluded in the same audience. The day aforesaid, from morning until noon, he answered unto more than forty articles, most subtilly objected against him; denying that he held or maintained any such articles as were either hurtful or false, and affirming that those witnesses had deposed them against him falsely and slanderously, as his most cruel and mortal enemies. In the same session they had not yet proceeded unto death, because that the noon-time drew fast on, that he could not answer unto the articles. Wherefore,



fore, for lack of time sufficient to answer unto the residue of the articles, there was another time appointed, which was the third day after the foresaid Saturday before the ascension of our Lord, at which time again early in the morning he was brought unto the said cathedral church to answer unto all the residue of the articles.

In all which articles, as well those which he had answered unto the Saturday before, as in the residue, he cleared himself very learnedly, refelling his adversaries (who had no cause, but only of malice and displeasure were set against him, and did him great wrong) in such sort, that they were themselves astonied at his oration, and refutation of their testimonies brought against him; and with shame enough were put to silence. As when one of them had demanded of him, what he thought by the sacrament of the altar? he answered, Before consecration (said he) it is bread and wine; after the consecration it is the true body and blood of Christ; adding withal more words according to their catholic faith. Then another rising up, Jerome, said he, there goeth a great rumour of thee, that thou shouldst hold bread to remain upon the altar. To whom he pleasantly answered, saying, That he believed bread to be at the bakers. At which words being spoken, one of the Dominic friers fumishly took on, and said, What? dost thou deny that which no man doubteth of? Whose peevish sauciness Jerome with these words did well repress; Hold thy peace, (said he), thou monk, thou hypocrite; and thus the monk being nipped in the head, sat down dumb. After whom started up another, who with a loud voice cried out, I swear (said he) by my conscience, that to be true, that thou dost deny. To whom said Jerome again, speaking in Latin, *Heus, inquit, sic jurare per conscientiam tutissima fallendi via est.* That is, "Thus to swear by your conscience, is the next way to deceive." Another there was, a spiteful and a bitter enemy of his, whom he called by no other name than dog, or ass. After he had thus refuted them one after another, that they could find no crime against him, neither in this matter, nor in any other, they were all driven to keep silence.

This done, then were the witnesses called for, who com-

ming in presence gave testimony unto the articles before produced. By reason whereof the innocent cause of Jerome was oppressed, and began in the council to be concluded. Then Jerome rising up began to speak; For so much (saith he) as you have heard mine adversaries so diligently hitherto, convenient it is that you should also now hear me to speak for myself. Whereupon with much difficulty at last audience was given in the council for him to say his mind. Which being granted, he from morning to noon continuing, intreated of divers and sundry matters, with great learning and eloquence. Who, first beginning with his prayer to God, besought him to give him spirit, ability, and utterance, which might most tend to the profit and salvation of his own soul. And so entering into his oration,

I know, saith he, reverend lords, that there have been many excellent men, which have suffered much otherwise than they have deserved, being oppressed with false witnesses, and condemned with wrong judgments. And so beginning with Socrates, he declared how he was unjustly condemned of his countrymen, neither would he escape when he might; taking from us the fear of two things, which seem most bitter to men, to wit, of imprisonment and death. Then he inferred the captivity of Plato, the banishment of Anaxagoras, and the torments of Zeno. Moreover, he brought in the wrongful condemnation of many Gentiles, as the banishment of Rupilius, reciting also the unworthy death of Boetius, and of others, whom Boetius himself doth write of.

From thence, he came to the examples of the Hebrews, and first began with Moses the deliverer of the people and the lawgiver, how he was oftentimes slandered of his people, as being a seducer and contemner of the people. Joseph also, saith he, for envy was sold of his brethren, and for false suspicion of whoredom was cast into bands. Besides these, he reciteth Esaias, Daniel, and almost all the prophets, who, as contemners of God, and seditious persons, were oppressed with wrongful condemnation. From thence he proceeded to the judgment of Susanna, and of divers

other

other besides, who being good and holy men, yet were they unjustly cast away with wrongful sentence. At the length he came to John Baptist, and so in long process he descended unto our Saviour, declaring how it was evident to all men, by what false witnesses both he and John Baptist were condemned. Moreover, how Stephen was slain by the college of the priests, and how all the apostles were condemned to death, not as good men, but as seditious stirrers up of the people, and contemners of the gods, and evil-doers. It is unjust, saith he, unjustly to be condemned one priest of another, and yet he proved, that the same hath so happened most unjustly in that council of priests. These things did he discourse at large, with marvellous eloquence, and with singular admiration of all that heard him.

And forasmuch as all the whole sum of the cause did rest only in the witnesses, by many reasons he proved that no credit was to be given unto them, especially seeing they spake all things of no truth, but only of hatred, malice, and envy. And so prosecuting the matter, so lively and expressly he opened unto them the causes of their hatred, that he had almost persuaded them. So lively and likely their hatred was detected, that almost no trust was given to their testimonies, save only for the cause and quarrel wherein they stood touching the pope's doctrine. All mens minds here were moved and bending to mercy towards him; for he told them how that he, of his own accord, came up to the council, and to purge himself he did open unto them all his life and doings, being full of virtue and godliness. This was (saith he) the old manner of ancient and learned men and most holy elders, that in matters of faith, they did differ many times in arguments, not to destroy the faith, but to find out the verity. So did Augustine and Jerome dissent, not only being divers, but also contrary one from the other, and yet without all suspicion of heresy.

All this while the pope's holy council did wait still, when he would begin to excuse himself, and to retract those things which were objected against him, and to crave pardon of the council. But he persisting still in his constant oration,  
did



did acknowledge no error, nor gave any signification of retraction.

At last, entering into the praise and commendation of Mr John Hufs, he affirmed, that he was a good, just, and holy man, and much unworthy that death which he did suffer. Whom he did know from his youth upward to be neither fornicator, drunkard, neither any evil or vicious person, but a chaste and sober man, and a just and true preacher of the holy gospel; and whatsoever things Mr John Hufs and Wickliff had holden or written specially against the abuse and pomp of the clergy, he would affirm even unto the death, that they were holy and blessed men; and that in all points of the catholic faith, he doth believe as the holy catholic church doth hold or believe. And finally he did conclude, that all such articles as John Wickliff and John Hufs had written and put forth against the enormities, pomp, and disorder of the prelates, he would firmly and stedfastly, without recantation, hold and defend even unto the death. And last of all he added, that all the sins that ever he had committed, did not so much gnaw and trouble his conscience, as did that only sin, which he had committed in that most pestiferous fact, when as in his recantation he had unjustly spoken against that good and holy man, and his doctrine, and specially in consenting unto his wicked condemnation, concluding that he did utterly revoke and deny that wicked recantation which he made in that most cursed place, and that he did it through weakness of heart, and fear of death; and, moreover, that whatsoever thing he hath spoken against that blessed man, he hath altogether lied upon him, and that he doth repent him with his whole heart that ever he did it.

And at the hearing hereof the hearts of the hearers were not a little sorry. For they wished and desired greatly that such a singular man should be saved, if otherwise their blind superstition would have suffered it. But he continued still in his prefixed sentence, seeming to desire rather death than life. And persisting in the praise of John Hufs, he added, moreover, that he never maintained any doctrine against the state of the church, but only spake against the abuses of the clergy, against the pride, pomp, and excess

cess of the prelates. For so much as the patrimonies of the churches were first given for the poor, then for hospitality, and, thirdly, to the reparations of the churches; it was a grief to that good man (said he) to see the same mispent and cast away upon harlots, great feasting, and keeping of horses and dogs, upon gorgeous apparel, and such other things unseeming Christian religion. And herein he shewed himself marvellous eloquent, yea, never more.

And when his oration was interrupted many times by divers of them, carping at his sentences as he was in speaking; yet was there none of all those that interrupted him which escaped unblanckt, but he brought them all to confusion, and put them to silence. When any noise began, he ceased to speak, and after began again, proceeding in his oration, and desiring them to give him leave a while to speak, whom they hereafter should hear no more; neither yet was his mind ever dashed at all these noises and tumults.

And this was marvellous in him to behold, notwithstanding he continued in strait prison three hundred and forty days, having neither book, nor almost light to read by, yet how admirable his memory served him; declaring how all those pains of his strait handling did not so much grieve him, as he did wonder rather to see their unkind humanity towards him.

When he had spoken these and many things as touching the praise of John Wickliff and John Hufs, they which sat in the council whispered together, saying, By these his words it appeareth that he is at a point with himself. Then was he again carried into prison, and grievously fettered by the hands, arms, and feet, with great chains and fetters of iron.

The Saturday next before the ascension-day, early in the morning, he was brought with a great number of armed men unto the cathedral church before the open congregation, to have his judgment given him. There they exhorted him, that those things which he had before spoken in the open audience, as is aforesaid, touching the praise and commendation of Mr John Wickliff, and Mr John Hufs, confirming and establishing their doctrine, he would yet recant the same. But he marvellous stoutly, without all fear, spake

spake against them, and amongst other things said unto them, I take God to my witness, and I protest here before you all, that I do believe and hold the articles of the faith, as the holy catholic church doth hold and believe the same; but for this cause shall I now be condemned, for that I will not consent with you unto the condemnation of those most holy and blessed men aforesaid, whom you have most wickedly condemned for certain articles, detesting and abhorring your wicked and abominable life. Then he confessed there before them all his belief, and uttered many things very profoundly and eloquently, insomuch that all men there present could not sufficiently commend and praise his great eloquence and excellent learning, and by no means could they induce or persuade him to recant.

Then a certain bishop, named the bishop of Londy, made a certain sermon exhortative against Mr Jerome, persuading to his condemnation.

After the bishop had ended the said sermon, Mr Jerome said again unto them, You shall condemn me wickedly and unjustly. But I after my death will leave a remorse in your conscience, and a nail in your hearts: *Et cito vos omnes, ut respondeatis mihi coram altissimo & justissimo iudice post centum annos.* That is, "And here I cite you to answer unto me before the most high and just Judge, within a hundred years.

No pen can sufficiently write, or note those things which he most eloquently, profoundly, and philosophically had spoken in the said audience, neither can any tongue-sufficiently declare the same; wherefore I have but only touched here the superficial matter of his talk, partly and not wholly noting the same. Finally, when as by no means he might be persuaded to recant the premisses, immediately even in his presence, the sentence and judgment of his condemnation was given against him, and read before him.

**I**N the name of God, *Amen.* Christ our God, and our Saviour, being the true vine, whose Father is the husbandman, taught his disciples, and all other faithful men, saying, *If any man dwell not in me, let him be cast out as a bough or branch, and let him wither and dry, &c.* The doctrine and precepts



precepts of which most excellent doctor and master this most sacred synod of Constance executing and following in the cause of inquisition against heretics, being moved by this said sacred synod, through report, public fame, and open infamation, proceeding against Jerome of Prague, master of art, layman, by the acts and processes of whose cause it appeareth, that the said Mr Jerome hath holden, maintained, and taught divers articles heretical and erroneous, lately reproved and condemned by the holy fathers, some being very blasphemous, other some offending godly ears, and many temerarious and seditious, which have been affirmed, maintained, preached, and taught by the men of most damnable memory, John Wickliff and John Hufs, the which are also written in divers of their works and books. Which articles of doctrine, and books of the said John Hufs and Wickliff, together with their memory, and the person of the said John Hufs, were by the said sacred synod condemned of heresy. The which sentence of condemnation this Jerome afterward, during the time of inquisition, acknowledged in the said sacred synod, and approved the true catholic and apostolic faith, thereunto consenting, accursing all heresy, specially that whereof he was infamed, and confessed himself to be infamed, and that which in times past John Hufs and John Wickliff maintained and taught in their works, sermons, and books, for the which the said Wickliff and Hufs, together with their doctrine and errors, were by the said sacred synod as heretical condemned. The condemnations of all which the premisses he did openly profess and allow, and did swear that he would persevere and continue in the verity of that faith. And if that he should presume at any time to hold opinion, or preach contrary thereunto, that he would submit himself to the trial and truth of the canons, and be bound to perpetual punishment. And this his profession written with his own hand he delivered up unto the holy council. Many days after his said profession and abjuration, as a dog returning unto his vomit, to the intent he might openly vomit up the most pestilent poison which had long lurked and lain hid in his breast, he required and desired that he might be openly heard before the council. The which being granted unto him, he

affirmed, said, and professed before the whole synod, being publicly gathered together, that he had wickedly consented and agreed to the sentence and judgment of the condemnation of the said Wickliff and Hufs, and that he had most shamefully lied in approving and allowing the said sentence, neither was he ashamed to confess that he had lied; yea, he did also revoke and recant his confession, approbation, and protestation, which he had made upon their condemnation, affirming, that he never at any time had read any errors or heresy in the books and treatises of the said Wickliff and Hufs; albeit he had before confessed it, and it is evidently proved, that he did diligently study, read, and preach their books, wherein it is manifest that there are contained many errors and heresies. Also the said Mr Jerome did profess, as touching the sacrament of the altar, and the transubstantiation of the bread into the body of Christ, that he doth hold and believe as the church doth hold and believe, saying also that he doth give more credit unto St Augustine, and the other doctors of the church, than unto Wickliff and Hufs. It appeareth, moreover, by the premisses, that the said Jerome is an adherent and maintainer of the said Wickliff and Hufs, and their errors, and both is and hath been a favourer of them. Wherefore the said sacred synod determineth the said Mr Jerome, as a rotten and withered branch, not growing upon the vine, to be cut off and cast out. The said synod also pronounceth, declareth, and condemnaeth him as an heretic and drowned in all kind of heresies, excommunicate and accursed, leaving him unto the arbitrament and judgment of the secular judge, to receive just and due punishment, according to the quality of so great an offence; the sacred synod notwithstanding intreating that the said judge would moderate his sentence of judgment without peril of death.

The which sentence so given before his face, and ended, a great and long mitre of paper was brought unto him, painted about with red devils, the which when he beheld and saw, throwing away his hood upon the ground amongst the prelates, he took the mitre and put it upon his head, saying, Our Lord Jesus Christ, when as he should suffer death for me most wretched sinner, did wear a crown of  
 thorns

thorns upon his head; and I, for his sake, instead of that crown, will willingly wear this mitre and cap. Afterward was laid hold of by the secular power.

After that he was led out of the said church to the place of execution; when he was going out of the church, with a cheerful countenance, and a loud voice, lifting his eyes up unto heaven, he began to sing, *Credo in unum Deum*, as it is accustomed to be sung in the church. Afterward, as he passed along, he did sing some canticles of the church; the which being ended, in the entering out of the gate of the city, as men go unto Gothlehem, he did sing this hymn, *Felix namque*. And that respond being ended, after he came to the place of execution, where Mr John Hufs before had suffered death innocently, kneeling down before an image which was like unto the picture of Mr John Hufs, which was there prepared to burn Mr Jerome, he made a certain devout prayer.

While he was thus praying, the tormentors took him up, and lifting him up from the ground spoiled him of all his garments, and left him naked, and afterwards girded him about the loins with a linen cloth, and bound him fast with cords and chains of iron to the said image which was made fast unto the earth; and so standing upon the ground, when as they began to lay the wood about him, he sung, *Salve festa dies*. And when the hymn was ended, he sung again with a loud voice, *Credo in unum Deum*, unto the end. That being ended, he said unto the people in the German tongue in effect as followeth: Dearly beloved children, even as I have now sung, so do I believe, and none otherwise. And this creed is my whole faith, notwithstanding now I die for this cause, because I would not consent and agree to the council, and with them affirm and hold that Mr John Hufs was by them holily and justly condemned; for I did know well enough that he was a true preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

After that he was compassed in with the wood up to the crown of the head, they cast all his garments upon the wood also, and with a firebrand they set it on fire. The which being once fired, he began to sing with a loud voice, *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*. When that



was ended, and that he began vehemently to burn, he said in the vulgar Bohemian tongue, O Lord God, Father Almighty, have mercy upon me, and be merciful unto my offences, for thou knowest how sincerely I have loved thy truth. Then his voice, by the vehemency of the fire, was choked and stopped, that it was no longer heard, but he moved continually his mouth and lips, as though he had still prayed or spoken within himself.

When as in a manner his whole body with his beard was burned round about, and that there appeared through the great burning upon his body certain great bladders as big as an egg, yet he continually very strongly and stoutly moved, and shaked his head and mouth, by the space almost of one quarter of an hour. So burning in the fire, he lived with great pain and martyrdom, whilst one might easily have gone from St Clements over the bridge unto our lady-church; he was of such a stout and strong nature. After that he was thus dead in the fire, by and by they brought his bedding, his strawbed, his boots, his hood, and all other things that he had in the prison, and burned them all to ashes in the same fire. The which ashes, after that the fire was out, they did diligently gather together, and carry them in a cart, and cast them into the river of Rhene, which ran hard by the city.

That man which was the true reporter hereof, and which testified unto us the acts and doings about the condemnation of Mr Jerome, and sent the same unto us to Prague in writing, doth thus conclude. All these things (saith he) I did behold, see, and hear to be done in this form and manner. And if any man do tell you the contrary, do not credit him; for all those things which happened unto him, when he came toward Constance, and also at his first coming unto Constance of his own free will, and afterward when he was brought bound unto Constance, as is aforesaid, I myself did see, and perfectly behold, and for a perpetual memory thereof to be had for ever, I have directed the same unto you, not lying or falsifying any point thereof, as he which is the searcher of all mens hearts can bear me witness, willing rather to sustain the note of ignorance and rudeness of stile, to bear witness unto the truth, than I would

would by any means be compelled, by tickling, or flattering the ears of the hearers with feigned and cloked speech, to swerve or go aside from the truth.

Thus end the tragical histories of Mr John Hufs, and Mr Jerome of Prague, faithfully gathered and collected by a certain Bohemian, being a present witness and beholder of the same, written and compiled first in Latin, and so sent by the said Bohemian into his country of Boheme, and again translated out of the Latin with like fidelity into our English tongue.

In the mean time, while Mr Jerome was in this trouble, and before the council, the nobles and lords of Boheme and of Moravia (but not a little aggrieved thereat) directed their letters unto this barbarous council of Popish murderers, in tenor and form of words as followeth.

*The letter of the fifty-four nobles of Moravia, written unto the council of Constance, in the defence of Mr John Hufs and Jerome of Prague.*

To the right reverend fathers and lords in Christ, the lords cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, ambassadors, doctors, and masters, and to the whole council of Constance, we the nobles, lords, knights, and esquires, of the famous marquisdome of Moravia, with the desire of all goodness, and the observation of the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**F**OR so much as every man, both by the law of nature, and also by God's law, is commanded to do that unto another man, which he would have done unto himself, and is forbidden to do that thing unto another which he would not have done unto himself, as our Saviour saith, *All things whatsoever ye will that men should do unto you, the same do you unto them, for this is the law and the prophets*; yea, the law is fulfilled in this one point, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*: we therefore (God being our author) having respect as much as in us lieth unto the said law of God, and the love of our neighbour, before did send our letters

letters unto Constance for our dearly beloved friend of good memory, Mr John Hufs bachelor of divinity, and preacher of the gospel. Whom of late, in the council of Constance, (we know not with what spirit being led), you have condemned as an obstinate heretic; neither having confessed any thing, neither being lawfully convicted, as were expedient, having no errors or heresies declared or laid against him, but only at the sinister, false, and importune accusations, suggestions, and instigations of his mortal enemies, and the traitors of our kingdom and marquidom of Moravia. And being thus unmercifully condemned, you have slain him with most shameful and cruel death, to the perpetual shame and infamy of our most Christian kingdom of Boheme, and the famous marquidom of Moravia, (as we have written unto Constance, unto the most noble prince and lord, the lord Sigismund king of Romans, and of Hungary, the heir and successor of our kingdom), the which was also read and published in your congregations, which we will here also have enrolled; and have burned him, as it is reported, in reproach and contempt of us.

Wherefore we have thought good even now to direct our letters-patents to your severences now present in the behalf of Mr John Hufs, openly professing and protesting both with heart and mouth, that he, the said Mr John Hufs, was a just, good, and catholic man, and a long season worthily commended and allowed in our kingdom for his life and conversation. He also preached and taught us and our subjects the law of the gospel, and of the holy prophets, and the books of the Old and New Testament, according to the exposition of the holy doctors approved by the church, and left many monuments in writing, most constantly detesting and abhorring all errors and heresies, continually admonishing both us and all faithful Christians to do the like, diligently exhorting all men as much as in him lay, by his words, writings, and travel, unto quietness and concord; so that using all the diligence that we might, we never heard or could understand, that Mr John Hufs had preached, taught, or by any means affirmed any error or heresy in his sermons, or that by any manner of means he had



had offended us, or our subjects, either by word or deed, but that he always led a quiet and a godly life in Christ, exhorting all men diligently, both by his word and works, as much as he might, to observe and keep the law of the gospel, and the institutions of the holy fathers, after the preaching of our holy mother the church, and to the edifying of mens souls. Neither did these premisses, which you had so perpetrated to the reproach both of us and our kingdom and marquidom, suffice and content you, but that also, without all mercy and pity, you have apprehended, imprisoned, and condemned, and even now peradventure, like as you did Mr John Hufs, you have most cruelly murdered the worshipful man Mr Jerome of Prague, a man abounding in eloquence, master of the seven liberal arts, and a famous philosopher, not being seen, heard, examined, neither convict, but only at the sinister and false accusations of his and our accusers and betrayers.

Furthermore, it is come to our knowledge and understanding, (which we do not without great grief rehearse), as we may also evidently gather by your writings, how that certain detractors, odious both to God and men, privy enviers and betrayers, have wickedly and grievously, albeit falsely and traiterously, accused us, our kingdom and marquidom aforesaid, before you in your council, that in the said kingdom of Boheme, and marquidom of Moravia, divers errors are sprung up, which have grievously and manifoldly infected both our hearts, and also the hearts of many faithful men; insomuch that without a speedy stop or stay of correction, the said kingdom and marquidom, together with the faithful Christians therein, should incur an irreparable loss and ruin of their souls.

These cruel and pernicious injuries which are laid unto us, and to our said kingdom and marquidom, albeit most falsely and slanderously, how may we suffer? For so much as, through the grace of God, (when in a manner all other kingdoms of the world have oftentimes wavered, making schisms and antipopes), our most gracious kingdom of Boheme, and most noble marquidom of Moravia, since the time they did receive the catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Christ, as a most perfect quadrant \*, have  
 \* A quadrant always without reproof stuck upon the  
 being four church of Rome, and have sincerely done  
 square, pro- their true obedience. Also with how great  
 verbially sig- costs, and charges, and great travel, with  
 nifieth a man what worship and due reverence they have  
 that is con- revered the holy mother the church and  
 stant and im- her pastors, by their princes and faithful  
 mutable, subjects, it is more manifest than the day-  
 Rom. xii. light unto the whole world; and your-  
 selves, if you will confess the truth, can wit-  
 ness the same also.

Wherefore, that we, according to the mind of the apostle,  
 may procure honest and good things, not only before God,  
 but before men also, and lest, by neglecting the famous re-  
 nown of the kingdom and marquidom, we be found cruel  
 toward our neighbours, having a stedfast hope, a pure and  
 sincere conscience and intent, and a certain true faith in  
 Christ Jesus our Lord, by the tenor of these we signify and  
 declare unto your fatherhoods, and to all faithful Christians,  
 openly professing both with heart and mouth, that what-  
 soever man, of what estate, preheminance, dignity, con-  
 dition, degree, or religion soever he be, which hath said,  
 or affirmed, either doth say or affirm, that in the said king-  
 dom of Boheme, and marquidom of Moravia, heresies have  
 sprung up which have infected us and other faithful Chri-  
 stians, as is aforesaid, (the only person of our most noble  
 prince and lord, Sigismund king of Romans and of Hun-  
 gary, &c. our lord and heir successor, being set apart,  
 whom we trust and believe not to be guilty in the pre-  
 misses), all and every such man (as is aforesaid) doth lie  
 falsely upon his head, as a wicked and naughty traitor and  
 betrayer of the said kingdom and marquidom, and most  
 traiterous unto us, and most pernicious heretic, the son of  
 all malice and wickedness, yea, and of the devil himself,  
 who is a liar, and the father of all lies.

Notwithstanding, we for this present committing the fore-  
 said injuries unto God, unto whom vengeance pertaineth,  
 who will also abundantly reward the workers of iniquity,  
 will prosecute them more amply before him, whom God  
 shall

shall appoint in the apostolic see, to govern his holy church, as the only and undoubted pastor. Unto whom, God willing, we exhibiting our due reverence and obedience as faithful children, in those things which are lawful, honest, and agreeable to reason and the law of God, will make our request and petition, that speedy remedy may be provided for us, our said kingdom and marquidom, upon the premisses, according to the law of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the institutions of the holy fathers. The premisses notwithstanding, we setting apart all fear and mens ordinances provided to the contrary, will maintain and defend the law of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the devout, humble, and constant preachers thereof, even to the shedding of our blood.

Dated at Sternberg, in the year of our Lord 1415.  
upon St Wenceslaus day, martyr of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Round about the said letters there were fifty-four seals hanging, and their names subscribed, whose seals they were. The names of which noblemen I thought it good here to annex withal, partly for the more credit of that which hath been said, partly also for example's sake, to the intent that our noblemen and gentlemen in this our realm of England, now living in this clear light of the gospel, may by their example understand, that if they join themselves with the gospel of Jesus, zealously, and as they should do, yet are they neither the first, nor the most that so have done before them: if not, yet the truth may here remain in the story to their shame, or else to their instruction, seeing so many noble and worthy gentlemen, within the small kingdom of Bohemia, to be so forward in those so dark days, and among so many enemies, two hundred years ago, to take part with Christ; and yet our gentlemen here in such long continuance of time, being so diligently taught, are neither in number nor in zeal to them to be compared, but will still take part, contrary both to Christ, and to the example



of these nobles, whose names they may see and read here following.

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Alffokabat de Wiscowitz.        | 29. Joffeck de N.  |
| 2. Ulricus de Lhota.               | 30. Henricus de N.   |
| 3. Joan. de Křimicz.               | 31. Waczlals de kuck.  |
| 4. Jolko de Sczitoiwcz.            | This nobleman did accompany John Hufs, and with certain horsemen conduct him to Constance. |
| 5. Pærdus Zwiranowicz.             |  |
| 6. Joan. de Ziwla.                 |  |
| 7. Joan. de Reychenberg.           |  |
| 8. Wildo Skitzyny                  |  |
| 9. Diliko de Biesla.               | 32. Henr. de Zrenowicz.  |
| 10. Kos de Doloylatz.              | 33. Baczko de Convald.   |
| 11. Joan. de Simufin.              | 34. Peter. dictus Nienick de Zaltoroldeck.   |
| 12. Dobeſſimus de Tiſſa.           | 35. Czenko de Moſſnow.   |
| 13. Drazko de Aradeck.             | 36. N.   |
| 14. Steph. de Hmdorkat.            | 37. Zibilutz do Clezam.  |
| 15. Joan. Dern de Gabonecx.        | 38. Joan. de Paterſwald.   |
| 16. Barſo dictus Hloder de Zeinicz | 39. Parſifal de Namyecz.   |
| 17. Joan. Hmrſdorfar.              | 40. Zodoni de Zwietzick.   |
| 18. Pfateſka de Wilklek.           | 41. Raczeck Zawſkalp.  |
| 19. Petrus Mog de Sczito-wicy.     | 42. Jon de Toſſawicz.  |
| 20. N. Studenica.                  | 43. Diwa de Spiſſnia.  |
| 21. N. Briſchell.                  | 44. Steff ko de Draczdw.   |
| 22. N. de Cromaſſona.              | 45. Iſſ ko de Draczdw.   |
| 23. Arannifick Donant de Polonia.  | 46. Odich. de Hlud.  |
| 24. Joan. Donant de Polonia.       | 47. Woſſart de Paulowicz.  |
| 25. Joan. de Cziczow.              | 48. Pirebbor de Tyrezenicz.  |
| 26. Wenceſlaus de N.               | 49. Rynard de Tyrczewicz.  |
| 27. N. de N.                       | 50. Bohunko de Wratifdow.  |
| 28. N. N.                          | 51. Ulricus de Racdraw.  |
|                                    | 52. Deſſaw de Nali.  |
|                                    | 53. Bonesb de Frabrenicz.  |
|                                    | 54. Eybl de Roifſowan.   |

*F I N I S.*

# An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

## A

**J**ames Adam smith in Edinr.  
Matthew Ædie slater in Canongate

Alexander Adam weaver in Leith

Robert Adamson weaver in Largo

John Adamson coalhewer in Kelly

James Ainsley printer in Edinr.

John Ainsley wright there

Adam Aitken mason there

Daniel Aitken smith there

Thomas Aitken weaver in Fountain-bridge

Alexander Aitken vintner in Leith

William Ainsley weaver Dalkeith

William Aitken travelling-chapman from Saline

Laurence Allan in Edinburgh

Gavin Alston printer there

Robert Allan printer there

John Allan wright there

James Allan barber there

Robert Alexander British linen-office

John Ambrose weaver in Dalkeith

Patrick Anderson writer in Edinr.

James Anderson wright there

William Anderson weaver in Picardy

David Anderson weaver in Leith

Andrew Anderson weaver there

William Anderson carpenter in St Monance

George Archibald printer Edinr.

Joseph Archibald printer there

David Arnot wright there

James Arnot weaver in Canonmills

Alexander Archibald shoemaker in Fisherrow

David Archibald gardener Morton

Thomas Archibald coalhewer in Stobs

## B

**J**ohn Bayne printer in Edinr.  
Alexander Ballantyne copper-smith there

Peter Balfour weaver in Picardy

Charles Ballnevs weaver in Fountain-bridge

John Baldie wright in Rentoul

Alexander Bayne malster in St Monance

Andrew Bayne mariner there

James Bennet in Edinburgh

David Bell bookbinder there

Robert Begg wright there

William Begbie wright there

Gorge Begbie smith there

Robert Berry weaver there

Robert Bell smith in Leith

Alexander Bishop smith in Edinr.

James Blyth tailor in Canongate

David Blues ropemaker in Leith

George Blackie

Thomas Blackie

Robert Blyth wright in Largo

George Blyth shoemaker in Pit-tenweem

Samuel Blackwood at the house of Glengnoy

James Blair wright in Fountain-bridge

Patrick Bonnie flaxdresser there

James Bookless miller Canonmills

John Bookless millwright there

James Brown in Edinburgh

William Bruce student of humanity there

John Brounlie mason there

William Brockey mason there

Robert Brown wright there

Charles Brichen wright there

John Brough harnessmaker there

John Brown brushmaker there

An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

John Brown tailor in Edinburgh  
 Alexander Brown weaver in Canon-  
 gate  
 William Brown weaver in Picardy  
 John Brand smith in Leith  
 Doughty Brown smith there  
 William Brown weaver in Fisher-  
 row  
 David Braidwood smith there  
 John Brounton smith at Ironmill  
 John Bruce wright in Barnyards  
 David Bruce tenant in Carnbie  
 parish  
 Anster Brown tailor in Belcomy  
 John Brown in Newmills  
 George Brand dyer at the wake-  
 mill of Bellsmill  
 Thomas Brown herd in Caper-  
 naum  
 Andrew Burns in Edinburgh  
 George Burns printer there  
 Thomas Buchan wright there  
 Daniel Buchanan lintdresser there  
 Alexander Buchanan merchant  
 in Borrowstounness  
 James Burns fivewright in St  
 Monance

C.

**D**uncan Campbell printer in  
 Edinburgh  
 Robert Carmichael printer there  
 Thomas Carmichael printer there  
 John Calder merchant there  
 Daniel Carmichael shoemaker  
 there  
 John Carnegie glassgrinder there  
 John Campbell porter there  
 John Campbell chairman there  
 Alexander Caddon weaver in Ca-  
 nongate  
 Robert Calderwood weaver there  
 Donald Campbell British linen-  
 office  
 Robert Carnie weaver in Picardy

Duncan Carse weaver in Leith  
 William Callander weaver in  
 Dalkeith  
 John Calderwood shoemaker in  
 Fisherrow  
 James Carmichael plaisterer there  
 Robert Campbell cobbler in East-  
 houses  
 Francis Carlaw in Newmills  
 Laurence Carmichael shoemaker  
 in Dollar  
 James Cant wright in Largo  
 John Carstairs wright there  
 John Carstairs mason Kilconquhar  
 Mr Joseph Caw doctor of the  
 grammar-school of Crail  
 Robert Christie printer in Edinr.  
 Archbald Chisholm printer there  
 John Christie wright there  
 Daniel Chisholm flaxdresser there  
 William Chisholm in Peppermill  
 William Christie indweller in  
 Ironcroach  
 William Christie in Hillfoot  
 William Christie in Craiginning  
 James Chapman mason in Ely  
 John Clark printer in Edinburgh  
 Alexander Clark printer there  
 Robert Clark bookbinder there  
 William Clark bookbinder there  
 Francis Clark wright there  
 William Clarkson wright there  
 James Clark brushmaker there  
 Archibald Clark weaver in Ca-  
 nongate  
 James Cleland weaver in Mul-  
 treehill  
 William Clark weaver in Water  
 of Leith  
 John Clark ropemaker in Leith  
 John Cleghorn shoemaker in Fi-  
 sherrow  
 Robert Cleugh tenant in Stobhill  
 Francis Clark in Newmills



# An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

James Core weaver in Edinburgh  
 Richard Cochran wright there  
 Patrick Comrie brushmaker there  
 John Combs clothshearer there  
 John Coupar weaver in Canongate  
 Hugh Colough merchant there  
 Margaret Corser in Leith  
 Thomas Cochran wright there  
 John Cowan shoemaker Dalkeith  
 Alexander Cockburn baker in  
 Fishherrow  
 John Cowie gardener at Louach  
 castle (hall  
 James Cornfoot farmer in Gordon  
 William Cornfoot tenant in A-  
 bercrombie  
 Janet Craw in Edinburgh  
 George Cromar gardener at Mul-  
 treeshill (mills  
 Andrew Crumbie mason in Canon-  
 John Crumbie miller at Water of  
 Leith (house  
 James Crumbie gardener at White  
 John Crawford nailer in Leith  
 Andrew Crawford farmer in  
 Kirkurd west mains

Alexander Cunningham printer  
 in Edinburgh  
 William Cunningham mason there  
 Peter Cunningham wright there  
 John Cunningham clothshearer  
 there  
 Adam Cubie weaver in Canongate  
 James Currie weaver in Leith  
 Robert Currie wright in Borrow-  
 stounness  
 Thomas Currie tenant in Glad-  
 house mill

## D

John Day printer in Edinburgh  
 William Darling printer there  
 Joseph Davidson printer there  
 Tho. Davidson flaxdresser there  
 David Dalziel weaver in Picardy

James Darge smith in Leith  
 John Dewar wright in Edinburgh  
 James Dempster wright there  
 David Deas of Eastertoun  
 John Dewar tenant in Hillfoot  
 Robert Dewar weaver in Largo  
 John Dick mason in Edinburgh  
 William Dick mason there  
 Patrick Dickie son merchant there  
 John Dick weaver in Canongate  
 Robert Dickson weaver there  
 David Downie weaver in Edinr.  
 James Dougal mason in Water of  
 Leith (keith  
 Lauchlan Don shoemaker in Dal-  
 John Drysdale mason Edinburgh  
 Tho. Drummond workman there  
 John Drummond flaxdresser Leith  
 John Duncan founder Edinburgh  
 Alex. Dudgen reedmaker there  
 William Duncan weaver in Ca-  
 nongate (tain-bridge  
 Patrick Dun flaxdresser in Foun-  
 Alexander Dunbar wheelwright  
 in Pittenweem

## E

Robert Elder shoemaker in  
 Edinburgh  
 Francis Elliot weaver in Dalkeith  
 James Elder feuer in St Monance  
 Adam Eason weaver in Portsburgh  
 John Ewing weaver in Canongate

## F

James Falconer smith in Leith  
 John Fachney wheelwright in  
 Dollar (weem  
 Charles Farmer brewer in Pitten-  
 Colin Farras tenant in Singray  
 George Ferguson in Edinburgh  
 Thomas Ferguson mason there  
 John Ferguson workman there  
 James Ferguson mason in Water  
 of Leith  
 David Ferguson weaver in Leith

An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

James Ferguson weaver in Leith  
 James Fell nailer in Dalkeith  
 Ebenezer Finlay weaver in Leith  
 Robert Fillen in Saline  
 James Fisher wheelwright in the  
 parish of Culross  
 William Fleming in Edinburgh  
 John Fleming printer there  
 Alexander Forbes printer there  
 William Forrest weaver in Water  
 of Leith (Dalkeith  
 Alexander Forrest flaxdresser in  
 Michael Foggie farmer in Long-  
 side (Bankhead  
 David Fotheringham tenant in  
 William Frazer in Dunfyre  
 Robert Fyall gardener in Kelly

G

James Garden printer Edinr.  
 John Galbraith printer there  
 Peter Galbraith weaver Canongate  
 Alexander Gall weaver there  
 Alexander Galbraith smith Leith  
 David Gamells ropemaker there  
 James Gardiner in Niddry-mill  
 Andrew Galloway tenant in  
 Balmounth  
 Alexander George printer Edinr.  
 James Gentle shoemaker there  
 John Gibson wright there  
 John Gilfillen soapboiler there  
 John Gib baxter in Canongate  
 John Gilmer ropemaker in Leith  
 John Govan weaver in Dalkeith  
 John Gibbons wright in Largo  
 Hugh Glen printer in Edinburgh  
 Robert Glen printer there  
 William Goodal there  
 William Goldie bookbinder there  
 Andrew Goldie shoemaker there  
 Henry Goldie weaver there  
 William Good weaver Canongate  
 William Gordon quildrazor there  
 Andrew Gordon wright Canomills

James Goodal weaver in Leith  
 John Godfman ropemaker there  
 William Gourley weaver Carnbie  
 John Gray printer in Edinburgh  
 Nathaniel Grant printer there  
 James Grewar printer there  
 James Gray wright there  
 Thomas Gray clothshearer there  
 Peter Grinten clothshearer there  
 Walter Greig weaver there  
 Norman Grant chairman there  
 James Grigory tailor Canongate  
 Hugh Gray weaver in Fountain-  
 James Grant in Leith (bridge  
 John Gray weaver in Dalkeith  
 Andrew Greson weaver there  
 Mungo Grant wright in Fisherrow  
 Alexander Greig weaver in Largo  
 Andrew Greig coalgrieve in Kelly  
 Alexander Grieve tailor in St  
 Monance (mond-lodge  
 Robert Gullon gardener at Drum-  
 John Guild wright in Penston

H

Miss Anne Haliburton Edinr.  
 John Hay printer there  
 William Hay printer there  
 Thomas Halladay student of di-  
 vinity there  
 James Hamilton merchant there  
 William Hastie smith there  
 John Haigs wright there  
 James Hamilton weaver there  
 William Hannan clothshearer  
 William Hancock clothshearer  
 John Hall weaver in Canongate  
 Hugh Hadaway weaver there  
 William Hasten miller Canonmills  
 John Haldane wright in Leith  
 Augus Hamilton smith there  
 James Hay mason in Fisherrow  
 Archibald Handyside mason there  
 Patrick Hay wright in Largo  
 Tho. Harley smith in Gallowshall

William Harley in Trufmaur  
William Hastie merchant in Bor-  
rowstounness

James Harrower of Hall-croft  
William Hastie tenant in Edglie  
James Henderson wright Edinr.  
Tho. Henderson merchant there  
Archibald Henderson mason there  
Thomas Henderson weaver there  
Geo. Hepburn porter Canongate  
Archibald Herriot stabler there  
Peter Hart weaver in Dalkeith  
George Herriot weaver there  
John Hill smith in Edinburgh  
George Hill wright there  
Thomas Hill wright there  
William Hill British linen-office  
Ebenezer Hill British linen-office  
Robert Hog printer in Edinburgh  
Andrew Home wright there  
James Houden combmaker there  
Alex. Horn weaver in Broughton  
James Hodge weaver in Foun-  
tain-bridge  
Arthur Houdon flaxdresser there  
Tho. Howison wright in Pitmosie  
Robert Hope in Carney  
Robert Hunter printer Edinburgh  
Robert Hunter wright there  
Thomas Hunter tailor there  
William Hunter porter there  
Patrick Hunter weaver in Tur-  
nidykes (in Culrofs  
William Hunter officer of excise

I

**R**obert Jackson printer in  
Edinburgh  
John Jardine printer there  
Andrew Jamieson wright there  
John Jack shoemaker Multreeshill  
Tho. Jamieson weaver in Foun-  
tain-bridge  
John Jack coalhewer in Pesthall  
Arthur Jeals in Edinburgh

David Imrie printer in Edinr.  
Robert Imrie ropemaker in Leith  
Charles Inglis mason Edinburgh  
William Innes wright there  
Alex. Innes clothshearer there  
Adam Innes tenant in Bonalie  
Geo. Inglis coachman in Morton  
James Innes flaxdresser in St  
Monance

John Johnston printer Edinburgh  
George Johnston printer there  
James Johnston printer there  
John Johnston shoemaker there  
James Johnston paper-maker  
James Johns flaxdresser in Leith  
James Johnston tailor in Dalkeith  
James Johnston tenant in Stobs  
John Johnston farmer in Lingo  
Walter Johnston wright in Largo  
William Johnston wright in Kil-  
conquhar

K

**J**ohn Kedie wright Edinburgh  
John Keppie weaver Fisherrow  
Mr John Kedie schoolmaster in  
St Monance  
David Keltie tenant in Thorntoun  
John King weaver in Picardy  
Thomas King weaver there  
George Kinnaird weaver Portf-  
burgh (Leith  
William Kiliman ropemaker in  
Andrew Kinnaird in Casingray  
John Kid travelling-chapman  
from Saline

John Knox smith in Leith-walk

L

**E**lizabeth Lawson in Edinr.  
Robert Laing wright there  
Alexander Lamb founder there  
Geo. Lawson weaver Canongate  
William Lawson weaver there  
David Laing farmer in Balduitho  
John Laing in Carnbie



James Laing farmer in Balmounth  
 Alexander Landels coalmaster in  
 Kingsmuir (stounness  
 James Langstaymaker in Borrow-  
 Robert Lambert tenant in Slunk  
 James Lee in Edinburgh  
 John Leslie printer there  
 William Loothead wright there  
 Robert Leslie wright in Largo  
 John Leslie farmer in Wormiston  
 Joseph Lethel weaver Randerston  
 Alexander Livingston Edinburgh  
 John Livingston printer there  
 Duncan Lindsay merchant there  
 David Lindsay vintner there  
 George Lindsay weaver there  
 George Lindsay butcher there  
 Peter Lindsay tenant in Hilltown  
 William Liddel herd in Moun-  
 tain-dean  
 John Low tailor in Edinburgh  
 Thomas Logie wright there  
 John Loudon weaver in Picardy  
 Joseph Lowrie chapman Dalkeith  
 Alexander Low shoemaker in  
 Borrowstounness  
 Thomas Lyon wright Edinburgh  
 James Lyon weaver in Dalkeith  
 David Lyle shoemaker there

M

**J**ohn M'Alister printer Edinr.  
 George Manson printer there  
 Alexander Mason printer there  
 William Martin printer there  
 Henry Martin turner there  
 James Matthews flaxdresser there  
 Peter Matthison chairmaster there  
 Robert Main corporal of the ca-  
 stle there  
 Robert Man barber in Canongate  
 John Maxwell weaver there  
 William Martin weaver in  
 Broughton  
 George Main weaver in Leith

James Mackie weaver there  
 David Matthison couper Dalkeith  
 Robert Marshal shoemaker there  
 Robert Mark brewer in Mussel-  
 burgh (ington  
 John Mackie workman in Clark-  
 Alex. Mastertown in Newmills  
 William Mastertown girdlesmith  
 in Culross (Monance  
 John Mackie merchant in St  
 Robert Matthison weaver there  
 Alexander Matthison smith in  
 Kilconquhar  
 James Matthison tailor there  
 David Mackie wright in Carnbie  
 David Mackie weaver Errols ferry  
 James M'Craken mason in Edinr.  
 Alexander M'Caflan printer there  
 Donald M'Craw watchmaker in  
 Canongate  
 Donald M'Darman serjeant of  
 the city-guard Edinburgh  
 Peter M'Darman chairmaster  
 there (in Kingsmuir  
 Malcom M'Donald coalgrieve  
 Andrew Melvin wright in Edinr.  
 Tho. Meek heelmaker Dalkeith  
 Andrew Meffen tailor Ironcroach  
 George Meldrum wright in the  
 parish of Coupar  
 John Melvill overseer to the  
 coal-work in Kingsmuir  
 Daniel M'Funn printer in Edinr.  
 William M'Grigor wright Largo  
 William M'Gill feuer in St Mo-  
 nance  
 Colin Mitchel printer Edinburgh  
 Robert Millar musicianer there  
 John Mill shoemaker there  
 James Mitchel wright there  
 Peter Millar wright there  
 Daniel Millar coppersmith there  
 Andrew Milroy tailor there  
 Robert Millar clothshearer there

# An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

William Miln wright Canongate  
 James Mitchel tailor there  
 James Mitchel weaver there  
 James Millar weaver there  
 Alexander Miln weaver there  
 James Miln flaxdresser in Fountain-bridge  
 John Millar flaxdresser in Leith  
 Thomas Millar ropemaker there  
 Alex. Millar ropemaker there  
 Archibald Miln weaver Dalkeith  
 John Millar smith in Pittenweem  
 James Mitchel farmer Balboothie  
 George Millen tenant there  
 Mr Robert Millen schoolmaster in Maryburgh  
 Alex. M'Kenlie weaver in Edinr.  
 Tho. M'Conachie weaver Leith  
 Geo. M'Kenzie ropemaker there  
 William M'Kintosh mason in Kingsmuir  
 Miss Mary M'Lean in Edinburgh  
 Miss Christian M'Lean there  
 Alex. M'Leod clothshearer there  
 James M'Millan weaver Dalkeith  
 John M'Nab lintdresser in Edinr.  
 Daniel M'Nab ropemaker Leith  
 Edward M'Neal weaver in Fisherrow  
 John More painter in Edinburgh  
 Peter More shoemaker there  
 Alexander Mowat wright there  
 Thomas Monteith wright there  
 James Morison weaver there  
 David Moffat weaver there  
 David Mortan brewer in Calton  
 David Monro flaxdresser in Leith  
 Gilbert M'Pherson printer Edinr.  
 James M'Queen nailer in Leith  
 John M'Rae printer Edinburgh  
 Henry M'Rach weaver there  
 James Muir printer there  
 Grisel Muir there  
 Robert Murray weaver in Leith

John Murray weaver in Garralfoot  
 George Murray weaver there  
 William Murray at Beamfield  
 George Murray smith in Fisherrow  
 George Murray weaver there  
 Alexander M'William flaxdresser in Leith

## N

John Nairn lapper in Canongate  
 Peter Nairn lapper there  
 John Nairn shoemaker there  
 Alexander Napier smith in Leith  
 Andrew Napier weaver Fisherrow  
 Adam Nethrie weaver Canongate  
 David Newton weaver in Drum-though  
 Adam Neill printer in Edinburgh  
 John Neilson wright there  
 Hugh Nisbet tailor there  
 William Neilson wright in Canongate  
 Alexander Nisbet weaver Picardy  
 John Niven weaver in Dalkeith  
 George Niven weaver Fisherrow  
 William Norie wright Edinburgh  
 William Noble weaver in Broughton of Tweddle

## O

John Oliphant flaxdresser in Fountain-bridge  
 David Over weaver in Leith

## P

Thomas Paterson printer in Edinburgh  
 Thomas Paterson smith there  
 Colin Paton wright there  
 James Paton brushmaker there  
 James Panton watchmaker in Canongate  
 Charles Paterson wright there  
 Archibald Paterson weaver there  
 Andrew Paterson British linen-office  
 John Paterson weaver in Leith

## An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

Archibald Paterfon weaver Leith  
 Mr Ninian Paton schoolmaster in  
 Dollar (Mains  
 Francis Paton tenant in Upper  
 Captain James Paterfon in Crail  
 William Petrie printer in Edinr.  
 Robert Pentland weaver in Leith  
 Charles Pearson wright in Fisher-  
 row (burgh  
 Thomas Peden couper in Mussel-  
 Robert Pearson in Newmills  
 John Philip weaver in Fisherrow  
 William Pirnie mason Edinburgh  
 John Pittygrow candlemaker in  
 Canongate  
 Charles Piery cotter at Carhate  
 James Poulings in Edinburgh  
 Tho. Pollock British linen-office  
 William Porteous weaver Picardy  
 James Prentice wright Canongate  
 John Pringle weaver in Forken  
 John Purdie wright in Edinburgh

### R

**H**ugh Randolph printer in  
 Edinburgh  
 Thomas Rait printer there  
 Edward Ramsay smith there  
 David Ramsay farmer in Charters  
 John Ramsay baxter Pittenweem  
 John Reid wright in Edinburgh  
 Robert Rendall printer there  
 George Reid wright there  
 David Reid wright there  
 James Reid carter there  
 William Reid clothshearer there  
 Thomas Reid weaver Canongate  
 John Reikie weaver in St Monance  
 Joseph Rhind weaver there  
 John Richie wright there  
 Walter Richie brewer Fisherrow  
 Thomas Richardson mason there  
 Tho. Richardson wright Edinr.  
 David Ross printer there  
 Andrew Robertson weaver there

John Robertson chairman Edinr.  
 Alexander Robertson weaver in  
 Water of Leith  
 James Robertson weaver Dalkeith  
 William Ronaldson weaver there  
 George Rogbie weaver in Largo  
 David Rodger merchant in St  
 Monance  
 James Rogbie tailor Pittenweem  
 Alex. Robertson weaver there  
 Robert Rob weaver in Anstruther  
 John Robertson of Shirsmill in  
 Culrofs  
 Robert Rolland shoemaker in  
 Burnside of Saline  
 John Russel writer in Edinburgh  
 Thomas Runciman weaver there  
 John Rutherford clothshearer  
 Michael Russel weaver in Water  
 of Leith

### S

**J**ohn Samuel upholsterer in  
 Edinburgh  
 John Salmon tailor in Canongate  
 William Samson weaver there  
 John Scott printer in Edinburgh  
 James Scott wright there  
 John Scott chairmaster there  
 John Scott weaver in Leith  
 James Scott weaver there  
 Alexander Scott weaver there  
 James Scott tailor in Dalkeith  
 William Scott mason Pittenweem  
 John Semple mason in Edinburgh  
 Peter Shaw there  
 Archibald Shearer wright there  
 George Shepard lintdresser there  
 Alexander Sharp weaver there  
 David Shiells weaver there  
 Tho. Sheuds clothshearer there  
 Alexander Shiols farmer in  
 Broughton (Gilmerton  
 Alexander Sharp coalhewer in  
 William Simson tailor in Edinr.



# An alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

Andrew Sinclair wright in Canongate

James Simson weaver in Picardy

William Simson weaver in Fountain-bridge

David Sime weaver in Leith

James Simson weaver in Largo

Alex. Sime tenant in Blacklaws

Alston Sirle in Peper-mill

John Smith smith in Edinburgh

Charles Smith mason there

Alexander Smith weaver there

Thomas Smith skinner in Leith

James Smith weaver there

George Smith weaver in Dalkeith

Tho. Smart shoemaker Fisherrow

George Smith innkeeper in Hunt house (Edinr.

William Sommers combmaker in

George Somerville barber there

William Spence there

Andrew Spalding weaver there

John Spalding flaxdresser in Leith

John Strachan printer Edinburgh

Richard Stewart printer there

Duncan Stewart printer there

John Stewart mason there

John Staig wright there

James Stoddart wright there

Archibald Stoddart wright there

John Stoddart coppersmith there

William Stroak smith there

Alexander Stroak smith there

David Stoddart barber there

David Stevenson weaver there

Neil Stewart drummer of the city-guard there

Peter Stewart lapper Canongate

Thomas Stenhouse smith there

William Stoddart smith in Calton

William Stevenson weaver in Fountain-bridge

James Stewart papermaker

John Stevenson weaver in Leith

John Stevenson flaxdresser there

John Stein ropemaker there

David Stark shoemaker Dalkeith

John Stewart weaver there

Thomas Stevenson siewright in Fisherrow (Monance

James Stocks merchant in St.

Alex. Stocks merchant there

James Stewart in Cowlshill

James Strathie in Burnside of Glendoven

Alex. Sunter weaver Errols ferry

James Symon printer Edinburgh

Andrew Symington officer on the tide of Fisherrow

## T

William Taylor printer in Edinburgh

Peter Taylor printer there

Andrew Taylor printer there

John Taylor mason there

Alexander Taylor wright there

Andrew Talbert weaver there

John Tait weaver in Dalkeith

Robert Taylor landlabourer in Anstruther

John Temple wright Edinburgh

George Telfer ropemaker Leith

Joseph Thomson printer Edinr.

Thomas Thomson printer there

Tho. Thomson upholsterer there

John Thomson wright there

John Thomas wright there

Robert Thomson workman there

John Thomson weaver in Water of Leith

Margaret Thomson in Leith

Adam Thomson flaxdresser there

John Thomson tobacconist in Musselburgh

William Thomson merchant in Clarkington

John Tod printer in Edinburgh

John Torrance wright there

Alphabetical list of the subscribers names.

Alexander Tod painter in Edinr.  
John Tod tailor in Pittenweem  
William Truan wright in Edinr.  
John Tweddle printer there

U

**R**obert Urquhart printer in  
Edinburgh  
Robert Urquhart wright there

V

**G**eorge Vert wright in  
Edinburgh

W

**R**obert Walker mason Edinr.  
John Waugh wright there  
Patrick Walker wright there  
Alexander Watters wright there  
James Walker wright there  
Alexander Walker brewer there  
Mr John Watson schoolmaster in  
Canongate (of Leith  
Andrew Watson miller in Water  
John Wallace in Teasofs  
William Wardlaw merchant in  
Dalkeith  
John Watson couper there  
James Watson brewer in Mussel-  
burgh  
Andrew Wands in Pitgobber  
John Weir coachmaker in Edinr.  
James Wemyss weaver Dalkeith  
William Webster farmer in Kil-  
brackment mill  
Joseph White weaver Canongate  
John White weaver in Leith  
James White weaver there

George White weaver Balchriffy  
John White of Pittendreich  
Robert Wilson printer in Edinr.  
Richard Wilson printer there  
David Willison printer there  
Miss Margaret Williams there  
Alex. Witherspoon wright there  
George Windrom clothsearer  
John Wilson weaver in Canongate  
George Wightman wright there  
Alex. Williamson weaver there  
David Wilson weaver in Leith  
Duncan Wilson wright there  
Andrew Williamson smith there  
Hugh Williamson shoemaker in  
Dalkeith

James Wilson weaver in Lugtoun  
William Wilson heelmaker in  
Fisherrow  
David Wilson weaver in Sandrigs  
John Wisheart weaver in Ely  
Thomas Wilson maltman in  
Carnbie dean  
Colin Wilson smith in Oventoun  
George Wood printer Edinburgh  
Alexander Wood weaver in Leith  
Alexander Wood wright in Largo  
William Wyld coppersmith in  
Edinburgh

Y

**J**ohn Yeats brewer Edinburgh  
James Yeats wright there  
Andrew Youl chairman there  
Colin Young wright in Canongate  
John Young weaver in Picardy



